Chapter-I
Introduction

Every systematized division of knowledge in ancient India was conceived as a
vidyā or a śāstra (science). The vidyā or the science dealing with the economics or
the economic life of people has been given a special attention by the Indians since
ancient times. Our ancient scholars have suggested terms equivalents for the term
‘economic’ in such expressions as artha-mimāṃsā, dhana-śāstra, artha-śāstra
and vārtā-śāstra etc.1

According to the accepted canons the vidyās or the divisions of knowledge
are four, viz. ānvikṣakī, trayī, vārtā and daṇḍanīti. This has been explicitly stated
by Kautilya that ānvikṣakī, the triple Vedas (trayī), vārtā (agriculture, cattle-
breeding and trade) and daṇḍanīti (science of government) are what are called the
four sciences.2

Ānvikṣakī

Max Müller, many year ago drew attention to the occurrence of the term
ānvikṣakī in the Gautama Dharamasūtra and pointed out that it is used in the
general sense of philosophy.3 Kautilya, however, brings under it only the three
systems of philosophy, i.e. the Sāṁkhya, the Yoga and the Lokāyata.4

Trayī

According to Kautilya, three Vedas, i.e., the Rgveda, the Sāmaveda and the
Yajurveda, constitute the triple Vedas. According to Kamandaka the three Vedas,
i.e. the Rgveda, the Sāmaveda and the Yajurveda constitute the Trayī.6

Vārtā

Vārtā is defined as the subject dealing with agriculture, cattle-breeding and
trade in the Arthaśāstra. Kautilya states that it is most useful in that it brings in
grains, cattle, gold, forest produce and free labour. It is by means of the treasury
and the army obtained solely through vārtā that the king can hold under his
control both his and his enemy’s party. Kamandaka opines that the occupation of those who live by rearing cattle and by cultivation and trade is called vārtā. Well-up in vārtā a man has nothing to be afraid of in a revolution.

A concrete idea of the scope of vārtā a be gathered from Manu’s description of the functions of the vaiśyas as agriculture, cattle-rearing, apprising the prices and qualities of gems, pearls, corals, metals, woven fabrics, scented things and salts, knowledge of sowing seeds, of specific traits of the soil, of the measure of the land, of the rules of weighing articles, the good and evil traits of countries, profits and losses in manufactured articles; wages of artisans, and workmen, the languages of different peoples the rise and fall of prices, the modes of selling and buying.

The paramount value of vārtā may be assessed in the Rāmāyana too, where Rāma asks Bharata, “Are your dependents, who are engaged in agriculture and cattle breeding adhering carefully to vārtā and living comfortably in the world?” In the Mahābhārata it is stated that the root of this world is in vārtā. It is sustained by vārtā. So long as the king cherishes vārtā, everything goes well. Vārtā was such a significant part of human life that even king had to learn it from experienced specialists employed by the state.

He was expected to be the master of economics. In this regard Kautilya states that having undergone the ceremony of tonsure (upanayana), the students shall learn the alphabet (lipi) and arithmetic. After investiture with scared thread, he shall study the triple Vedas, the science of ānvikṣakī under teachers of acknowledge authority (śīsta), the science of vārtā under theoretical and practical politicians (vaktrpravoktrbhyaḥ).

Manu has also considered it essential as he states that from those versed in the three Vedas let him learn the threefold (scared science), the science of government, the science of dialectics, and the knowledge of the (supreme) soul; from the people (the theory of) the (various) trade and professions.
The aim of vārtā thus was to guide the cultivator, the cattle-rearer, the trader, the artisan, the statesman and the teacher. Vārtā, hence was cultivated not as a single science but a body of different studies and the aim kept in view was not so much theoretical instruction, as practical mastery.

Thus vārtā in the economic spheres becomes very significant. It determines the functions and occupations of the bulk of people. That is why it has been referred to in the Epic and Purānic literature many a times.14

**Dandaṇīti**

The fourth of the branches of knowledge is the same as nīti-sāstra, the science of polity. It is the most important branch of knowledge from the viewpoint of government.

Kauṭilya says that the king makes own party and the other party subject to his will by means of koṣa ( treasurer) and danda (punishing power); danda provides security in the other branches of knowledge like ānviṣakā, the triple Veda and vārtā. Dandaṇīti leads to acquisition of what one has got, increase of what has been preserved and use of the increase for worthy objects.15 Kamandaka also opines that it is in this science that the other sciences have their origin.16

Apart from the above mentioned branches of knowledge regarding the economics in ancient India, we have many other works which deal with the economy and economic matters. *Arthaśāstra* is prominent among them. As far as it is concerned, it is even wider in scope than economics. It includes a number of other social sciences. The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya begins with the salutation to Śukra and Brhaspati who, tradition tells us were two great teachers of the art and sciences of governance which naturally included economics.

Kauṭilya himself at the very outset of his work says, “This is a collection of all the treatises promulgated by the earlier savants on the subject of acquiring and preserving or maintaining the earth.”17 This is with the special reference to the kings and ministers. The connecting link between the vidvās and the
Arthaśāstra is to be found in the relationship between knowledge and the aims of men (Puruṣārthas). The Indian doctrine of puruṣārthas indicates a four-fold division of the aim of existence. It divides human activities into four categories: Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa.

Of the four ends of human existence, the first three, viz. Dharma, Artha and Kāma, represent the moral and righteous, the economic and aesthetic values in life in relation to the worldly life. Each of these puruṣārthas is made to depend upon the other and all of them are correlated to the doctrine of varṇaśramadharma.

At the time Kautilya wrote, Indian society had already taken its four fold class division of the brāhmaṇa, or scholar, priest, teacher, the kṣatriya or warrior, the vaiṣya or traders, manufacture, or artisan and the śūdra, or the serving, labouring, the working class.

Thus the orientation of the Indian mind was towards Dharma (Duty) and that of Indian culture towards the realization of Dharma. It was ultimately dharmapradhāna. That is why the writers on the Arthaśāstra themselves landed the superiority of the precepts of Dharma to the precepts of the Arthaśāstra.

The Arthaśāstra, therefore might be regarded as occupying the same place in our ancient literature as a combination of jurisprudence, politics and economics.

Many western Scholars, such as L. Cossa, J. K. Ingram, L. H. Haney rather have some different views regarding the economics as a separate branch of learning in ancient India. They believe that outside the realm of literature, philosophy and religion, the ancient Hindus were ciphers. There is the assumption of the primitive nature of ancient Indian society and of the simplicity of old Indian life, which has found its why not only into histories of India, but into authoritative histories of economic doctrine also.
There is also the illusion that the correct economic thought is only of recent growth and exclusively of European origin.

It is commonly held that the science of economics is of comparatively recent growth, and that so far as England is concerned it cannot be taken much beyond the date of the publication of Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* (1776). Smith assumes that the prime psychological drive in man as an economic being is the drive of self interest. Secondly, he assumes the existence of a natural order in the universe which makes all the individuals striving for self-interest add up to the social good.21 J. S. Mill claimed that the subject of the work with which its enquiries are conversant has in all ages necessarily constituted one of the chief practical interest of mankind, and in some a most unduly engrossing one. That subject is wealth.22 He assumed that everyone has a notion sufficiently correct or common purposes of what is meant by wealth.

These views stressed the importance of goods above producers and has characteristic of the attitude of the Classical School both towards wealth and economics. These do not treat the whole of man’s nature as modified by the social state and the whole conduct of a man in society. These are concerned with him solely as a being who desires to possess wealth and who is capable of judging of the comparative efficacy of means for obtaining that end. It predicts only such of the phenomena of the social state as takes place in consequence of the pursuit of wealth.

This attitude of the western economists has raised questions like, “is wealth everything?” “In man absolutely nothing”? etc. After Marshall defined economics “as the study of mankind in the ordinary business of life”, and showed that economics examines that part of individual and social action which is most closely connected with the attainment and with the use of the material requisites of well being”.23 Economics is on one side a study of wealth and on the other and more important side a part of the study of man; taking an equal, if not more
important part with the study of religion as an interpreter of human action and in the moulding of human character.

The scholars have presented a wrong conception of Indians towards economics and wealth. The study of ancient Indian economic theories may lie in its helping to dispel such baneful illusions of the foreigners regarding Indian economic thoughts in ancient times because the evil results follow when such generalization are allowed to pass unchallenged and uncorrected. The understanding of the ancient Indian attitude towards economic study and towards economic questions might lead to a better appreciation than we have of Indian attitude towards life and knowledge and to a truer perception than we possess of the character and scope of the philosophical and scientific literature of ancient India.

The interdependence of economics and ethics has been a fundamental assumption in all Indian thought. The general attitude of Indians has always been to regard wealth not as an end in itself, but as a mean to ends.

In our socio-economic system, agriculture had been long established varied and flourishing with its ancillary branches of essential production of raw material for industry, dairying and for forest produce.24

In the age of Gautam Buddha, we find mention of towns, town planning, corporate life in the towns, the villages, the rural economy, ownership of land, land survey, land revenue, agriculture, forests, mines, cattle-rearing, hunting and fishing, different arts and crafts such as, metal industry, weaving, carpentry, leather work, pottery, stone work, ivory work, work in bone, horn, conch-shell and coral etc., salt, sugar, dyeing industries etc. We also come across the references of different guilds functioning at that time, the labour class, foreign trade, domestic trade etc. and the role of state in relation to economic life.25

Rhys Davids refers to the crafts in which people were employed about a camp or a palace such as; elephant riders, cavalry charioteers, archers, nine
different grades of army folk, slaves, cooks, barbers, bath attendants, confectioners, garland makers, potters, clerks, accountants etc. The noted scholar talks about the eighteen guilds (seniyo pūgū) such as the workers in wood, the workers in metal, the workers in stone, the weavers, the leather workers, the potters, the ivory workers, the dyers, the jewellers, the fisher folk, the butchers, the hunters and trappers, the cooks and confectioners, the barbers, the garland makers, the sailors, the rush workers, the basket makers and the painters.  

Trade as a permanent form of economic activity seems to be almost of pre-historic growth, while its indispensable accessories of money, currency, credit, exchange and banking were very freely used and understood by the mass of the people as well as the trading community and the administrative staff. The later worked as a fairly wide, efficient, economic and productive system of taxation, state dues, fees, tolls, produce of public domain or the profits of public enterprise. The place of nature in the shape of land, water, forest or mineral wealth as a factor in the primary production, and of man’s labour, his organising genius or administrative skill was well understood and so too the return due to these from the aggregate produce or the natural dividend.  

Economics in thus necessarily a social science, concerning man in his everyday life and pursuits, which would be impossible without association, organization and concerted action to predetermined ends. It is peculiar richness of India’s ancient civilization that her seers and sages had recognized these basic facts centuries before the western civilizations could even think of it.  

Thus the Indians were concerned about their economy and economic history writing since very early periods of Indian history. Here we are concerned with the economic life of India, particularly the Northern India during the Kuśāṇa period of Indian history.  

The Kuśāṇa period stands out in the history of India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Central Asia and Iran. This era may be called a landmark in the
historical and cultural progress of the east as such and of mankind as a whole. The mighty empire stretched from the Aral sea to the Indian Ocean and came to rank with three powers of the time- Rome, Parthia and China forming one of the most important link in the political system of the ancient world. In the annals of world history, the Kusana period was not merely an era of political unity between many peoples of the east and of world civilization as such periods in which social foundations were laid for the efflorescence of culture in the epochs to follow.

The Nationality or the Original Home of Kuśāṇas

The Kuśāṇas were one of the most dominating political powers in ancient India. They were not the original habitants of India. They came to India and settled down here. Their original home or nationality has been one of the most controversial subjects for a long time. It has been discussed by a large number of scholars. Almost all of them have taken into account the names of the Kuśāṇa rulers, their designation, dress and features depicted on their coins and lastly the references to the tribes in Greek, Chinese and Indian sources with any of which the Kuśāṇas could be equated.

We come across many theories regarding their nationality such as Turkish, Iranian, Mongolian, Chinese etc. Here we shall analyse these theories one by one and try to find a solution of the problem.

Turki Theory

The very first reference regarding their Turkish origin is found in the Rājataranginī of Kalhana where Kaniska is referred to as belonging to the dynasty of Turuṣkas i.e. Turks. Later in the accounts of Alberuni, he (Kanik) is said to be the descendent of the Śāhiya family of Tibetan origin which was a Turkish family. He has taken into notice his dress like short tunic, high hat, boots and arms etc. which he says Turkish. Bhandarkar also expresses similar view on the basis of depiction of Kujula Kadphises and Kaniska is same dress on their coins. Wilson too has almost the same opinion. Kennedy suggests that not only
their dress but their physical features prove their race as he gives a description of Kaniska’s features as a powerfully built barbarian King, with pointed cranium, the salient cheek bones, the large long and heavy nose, thick beards on the basis of his coins.\textsuperscript{32}

Besides this Hirth as quoted by Konow, has identified the title and designations of Kujula Kadphises, the Kuśāṇa monarch, usually in inscription and coin legends as \textit{yavuga}, \textit{yaiia}, \textit{yoos}, which in Chinese sources occurs as \textit{hi-hou}, with Turki \textit{jabga}.\textsuperscript{33} Hultzsch, according to Konow takes it as Turki \textit{Giijlü}, which means ‘strong’.\textsuperscript{34} Know reads it as \textit{güzel} ‘beautiful.’\textsuperscript{35} Sylvain Levi, as quoted by Konow, while referring to \textit{Abhidhamacintāmanī} opines that the Turks were Śakhas or Śākhis and the Kuśāṇas were also Śākhi or Turks because they used the royal title Śākhi which he says resembles with Śāhī in their inscriptions.\textsuperscript{36}

The Turki theory when minutely examined does not appear conclusive. Konow while quoting Joyce, rightly remarks that the physical features, mentioned above are characteristics of the so called Homoalpinus, largely noted in the population of Chinese Turkistan. He further suggests that the history and ethnology of the region indicates that the Turki element was comparatively late. Commenting on the statements of Kalhana and Hemacandra, he says that these are based on a later state of things when at a later time, Turki tribes appeared in the regions where once the Kuśāṇas ruled.\textsuperscript{37}

Regarding the titles and designations scholars are of the opinion that it has become difficult to find a Turki etymology for the word \textit{Yavuga}.\textsuperscript{38} Konow Think that most probably it was used by the Śakas in the form \textit{Jaüva}, i.e., \textit{Zaüva} and might have been taken by the Kuśāṇas from the Śakas.\textsuperscript{39}

Hence the Turki theory of the original home of the Kuśāṇas cannot be accepted as it lacks the strong evidences.
The Saka-Iranian theory regarding the nationality of the Kušānas is based on the assumption that the terms, designations etc. used by the Kušānas have their explanation in the Iranian language, once spoken and used in literature in parts of Chinesese Turkistan.40 Leumann, according to Konow, called it North-Aryan while giving an account of its peculiarities41 Pelliot42 calls it East Iranian while Lüders43 as the Saka language. Kistse and Konow spoke of it as Khotani44 as they argue that it was the official language of the Khotan country in the eight century CE and might have been spoken since the first century CE. Konow has further drawn the attention towards their designations like yavuga, kujula and erjhuna and some other designations particularly of Kaniska and his branches such as muroda and marjhaka which are there in an inscription of year 11 found at Zeda.45 The title or designation muroda he takes for murunda, the old Saka designation and marjhaka according to Konow stands for the Saka word Malysaki.46

Konow states that the coin legends of Kaniska and his successors were written in pure Khotani-Šaka in Greek letters as saonano sao kaneski kosano. The word sau is Saka word for king, which was written as sašau in later centuries.47

In conclusion Konow says, “Everything accordingly points to the conclusion that the Kušānas were Iranian at least in language and the affinity with the Šaka leads us to think that they were a Šaka clan or family.48

The conclusion of the theory drawn by Konow does not appear appropriate as how we can say that they were the members of Šaka can while we have the references that they defeated the Šakas in the Ta-hia region which is identified with Bactria. The same area we are talking about here.

Although we shall discuss it in detail later, yet the Kušānas and Šakas appear different families as they were fighting against each other. Later in India, the Šakas were ruling in the Surashtra region and were probably the Kṣatrapas (governors) of Kušānas. If they were of the same clan or family they should have
been ruling with them (Kuśāṇas) as rulers not as their governors or subordinates. These were the same Śakas who were defeated and ousted by Candragupta II Vikramādiṭiya of the Guptā dynasty from the Surashtra region. Moreover they never claimed that they belonged to the same clan or family as of those of the Kuśāṇas.

The Kuśāṇas in the Classical Greek and Latin Sources

The Classical Greek and Latin sources also throw light on the Kuśāṇas. Strabo refers to the defeat of the Greek Kings at the hands of Śakas.49 He talks about the Scythian nomads who defeated the Greeks. These were Asioi, Pasianoi, Sakarauloi along with the Tocaroi.50 Trogus also mentions the conquest of Bactria and Sogdiana by the Scythians namely Saraucae and the Asiani.51 Justin too narrates the same story.52 The Asiani tribe is being identified with the Yūeh-Chih of the Chinese sources by Sten Konow.53

The Kuśāṇas in the Indian Sources

The Indian sources also contain the information of some foreign rulers like the Tushāras are mentioned succeeding the Yavanas in the Purāṇas. They are assigned 107 years in Māṣṭyā Purāṇa and 105 years in Vāyu Purāṇa and Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa. The name Tukhāra is also mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata and in the Buddhist texts Sadharma-Smṛtyupasthāna and the Mahāmayūrī. They are described as the people of distinct race with their home in the mountains beyond the Himalayas. The Purāṇic sources say that the Tukhāra kings defeated the Greek rulers and captured India and ruled for more than a hundred years.54 These Tukhāras may be the Kuśāṇas as the archaeological mound at Māṭ near Mathurā yielding the Kuśāṇa royal statue is still known as Ṭokrī Tīla i.e., the mound of the Tukhāras.

The Chinese Origin Theory

This theory is based on the references in certain Chinese texts. In these texts they are mentioned as a different ethnic group55 who were in Chou-court.56
Mu T’ien-tzu Chuan locates them to the north-west of the Ying Gate, east of the Yellow river. But the Tsien Han-shu records that the Yüeh-Chih were originally nomadic people moving with their cattle. Shih-Chi and the Tsien Han-shu put them between Tun-huang and Ch’i-lien. This place is identified by the scholars with the Nan-shan or the Richtofen range. Thus the location of the place appears to be between Tun-h’uang and the Nan-shan in the Kau-su province of China.

These were the same Yüeh-Chih who finds mention with the two other tribes of China namely Hiung-nu and Wu-sun.

This theory regarding the nationality or the original home of the Kuśāṇa seems more appropriate than the others because the other statements regarding their nationality do not provide the appropriate data of their original home as almost all of them merely talk about their race. The dress may not be considered as reliable evidence to decide the original home of any particular race or set of people as it keeps on changing with time and region. The only literary evidence of their original home is there in the Chinese documents as stated earlier on the basis of which we may say that the Kuśāṇas belonged to the Yüeh-Chih tribe of the Kan-su province of China and after their migration from their original homeland settled down in the regions of Bactria sometimes around second century B.C.

The Early History and Migration

The early habitat of the Yüeh-Chih has been recorded in certain Chinese texts. They are referred to as the tribute bearers by Chou-shu who arrived at Chou-court around c. 1000 B.C. Later from the records of the Tsien Han-shu, it may assumed that Yüeh-Chih were in a very strong position in the regions of Liang-Chou, Kan-Chou, Su-Chan, Kua-Chou and Sha-Chou which are the part of Kan-su province of China.

In the meantime T’ou – man was the king of another tribe called Hiung-nu, the later Huñas. The Yüeh-Chih are said to be such a strong tribe during
these days that the Hiung-nu Chief T’ou-man had sent his son Mao-Tun (Mo-Tun) as a hostage to their country. He, however later some, how managed to escape from the territory of the Yüeh-Chih and after sometime became the King of Hiung-nu. It is said that he attacked the Yüeh-Chih and defeated them. He claims the victory over the Yüeh-Chih in a letter written by him to the Han emperor of China. All this seems to have happened around c.176 B.C.

The Tsien Han-shu narrates the story that after the Hiung-nu Chief “Lao Shang Shan Yu had killed the Yüeh-Chih leader (King) and made a drinking vessel from his skull, the Yüeh-Chih went far away (Westwards). The Yüeh-Chih were however not being fully destroyed by the Hiung-nu King as it is stated in the Tsien Han-shu that Yüeh-Chih, after their defeat at the hands of Hiung-nu, attacked their neighbours, the Wu-sun, who were in the valley of Ili river. Here they defeated the Wu-sun and killed their king Nan-Tou-mi. The Wu-sun fled to the Hiung-nu for protection. The Yüeh-Chih kept on migrating towards the west until they reached the country of Sai. There they defeated the ruler of Sai (Sai-wang) and occupied their territory. The Sai ruler is said to have migrated southwards.

The stay of the Yüeh-Chih in this region was not long. By now the son of the king of the Wu-Sun tribe, defeated by Yüeh-Chih, who was under the protection of Hiung-nu chief, had grown up. He is said to have gone westwards and attacked and defeated the Yüeh-Chih. They now moved westward to the regions of Ta-hsia. Some groups of the Yüeh-Chih remained in the Sai country.

The Chinese sources state that when K’un-mo of the Wu-sun attacked and defeated the great Yüeh-Chih, the latter migrated to the west and subdued Ta-hsia, and the K’un-mo of the Wu-sun occupied it.

According to these sources, after occupying Ta-hsia, the Yüeh-Chih settled there and established their royal court and capital somewhere near Kuei-river as
mentioned by Chang Ch’ien, who has located the region around 2000 li south west of the Ta-yüan and to the south of the Kuei river.

The Yüeh-Chih people who remained in the Sai country began to be called the Siao-Yüeh-Chih and the majority of people who moved westwards came to be known as Ta-Yüeh-Chih. They probably followed the Northern Route as there is the mention of a place named Kucha which lay in the Northern Route. They are said to have migrated through Kucha, Wen-su or Ak-su and ultimately reached the Sai country near the lake Issik-Köl. Here they are said to have defeated and driven away the Sai people, who are identified with the Šakas. The Šakas then occupied the regions of Chi-pin and settled there. The name of Chi-pin appears to be Kaspîr or Kāśvir which may be identified with modern Kashmir or at least a part of it.

The defeat and migration of the Yüeh-Chih from Kan-su at the hands of Hiung-nu, their capture of the Sai country and their further defeat at the hands of the chief of Wu-sun occurred in a very short span of time (c.174-160 or 158 B.C.). If Chang Ch’ien is correct in his estimate, they left the Sai country and conquered Ta-hsia around 130-129 B.C. at least before he returned back to China around 126-125 B.C.

It was in Ta-hsia that the Yüeh-Chih got divided into the five branches or hsi-hou namely Hsiu-mi, Shunag-mi, Kuei-shuang, Hsi-tun and Tu-mi.

By Now it appears that the Yüeh-Chih were dominating the Ta-hsia region which is generally identified as Bactria. This is perhaps the reason that the Yüeh-Chih people are called Bactrians. In this regard Strabo states that the best known of the Scythian nomads are those who took away Bactria from the Greeks.

The Bactrian Kingdom was invaded and conquered by four nomadic people Asioi (Asii), Pasianoi (Pasina), Tokharoi (Tocari) and Sakarauli (Sacarauli). Among these the Tokharoi were the Yüeh-Chih of the Chinese
sources. Strabo however did not make it clear that all the nomads invaded Bactria at the same time or at different times.

The invasion of the Bactria by the Scythians, the Asioi, the Pasianoi and Sakarauli has also been recorded by Trogus. He mentions that these nomadic tribes invaded the western Bactria which lay between Parthia and Eastern Bactria (Ta-hsia). The Chinese records refers to the invasion of Eastern Bactria or Ta-hsia by the Yüeh-Chih, while the western part was attacked by other nomadic people whom Strabo has mentioned.

The above discussion makes it clear that the Tokharians (Yüeh-Chih) snatched away the Ta-hsia area from the Greeks and established their Kingdom in the Oxus region.

The significant development during this time was that in China the Han emperor Wu-Ti was engaged in destroying the Hiung-nu, against whom the Yüeh-Chih were having grudges as they were defeated and expelled by the Hiung-nu from their native land. Due to this reason the Han emperor sent an envoy named Chang Ch’ien to establish relations with the Yüeh-Chih.

Chang Ch’ien is said to have reached the Yüeh-Chih country through Ta-Yuan and K’ang-Chü, situated on both sides of the Jaxartes or Syr Darya. In the mean times the king of the Yüeh-Chih was the son of the Yüeh-Chih chief who had been killed by the Hiung-nu. For his surprise, when Chang-Ch’ien arrived in his court, he found that the Yüeh-Chih ruler was engaged in his own enjoyment. He considered Han far away and had no intention to attack the Hiung-nu and take revenge of his father’s assassination.

When Chang Ch’ien returned back to China, he reported to the Chinese emperor that the Yüeh-Chih are militarily very strong and could only be persuaded by gifts and prospects of gain to acknowledge allegiance to the Han Court.
The Yüeh-Chih got busy in war with the Parthians as recorded by Justin. He writes that the imperial Parthian monarch Artabanus (II) was killed by the Thogarian. The Thogarians may be identified with the Tokharians or the Yüeh-Chih.

The victory over the Parthians indicates expansion or at least incursion of the Tokharians (Yüeh-Chih) into the Eastern Parthia after the subjugation of Ta-hsia.

The Hou Han-shu states that more than a hundred years after the division of Yüeh-Chih into five hsi-hou, the leader of Kuei-shuang, Ch’iu-Chiu Ch’üeh attacked and defeated the other four hsi-hou and declared himself their king (wang). This happened probably around c. 30-29 B.C. because when Chang Ch’ien visited the Yüeh-Chih, it had not yet been divided in five branches. The date of his visit is around c. 130-129 B.C. approximately which means that after his departure from the territory of the Yüeh-Chih, it was divided into five hsi-hou or branches and as stated above, after a hundred years of the division Ch’iu-Chiu Ch’üeh conquered them and amalgamated them in his empire which he named Kuei-shuang after his tribe’s name.

**Kujula Kadphises**

The leader of Kuei-shuang, Ch’iu- Chiu Ch’üeh has been identified with Kujula Kadphises by most of the scholars.

When we analyze the numismatic evidences, we come across a few names who were the rulers of Yüeh-Chih before Kujula Kadphises. These were Hyrkodes, Sapadbizes Phseigcharis and Miaos (Heros). But it cannot be said with certainty that all these rulers were Kuśāṇa rulers as except Miaos, who had referred to himself as a Kossan, i.e., Kuśāṇa in the legends of his tetradrachms none of the others had ever mentioned their lineage or their tribe to which they belonged.
Miaos should be placed before Kujula Kadphises on the basis of the forms of the letters on his tetradrachms and the evidences of the development of Greek palaeography in the region where his coins were found; he should be the ruler of the regions north of Hindukush sometimes around second half of the first century B.C.93 Above all he has not been mentioned in the Kuśāna genealogy after Kujula Kadphises. This means he should be ruling before Kujula Kadphises. The relation between the two is still not known.

Kujula Kadphises is said to have invaded the country of An-hsi, and took possession of the territory of Kao-fu, destroyed Po-ta and overcame Chi-pin (Ki-pin) and became complete master of these countries.94

An-hsi is identified with the Arsacid Empire, also known as Parthia to the scholars.95 The Parthian empire was stretched from the Euphrates to Arachosia and from the Oxus to the Indian Ocean. During c. 1st CE the Parthians were engaged in war with Rome which exhausted its resources and made it weak. It was further weakened by wars of succession. Kujula Kadphises took advantage of the situation and conquered it. This does not mean that Kujula Kadphises conquered the whole Parthia as it continued to exist till at least c. 226 CE.

The Kao-fu region is generally identified with Kabul region in the vicinity of Kabul river whom Ptolemy96 called “Koa” and Strabo called it “Kophes” which resembles the name Kao-fu. He has included Kao-fu in the Arsacid empire in the land of Paropanisadac.97 But Isidore of Charax has not included the area of Paropanside in the Parthian empire.98 Both these works are contemporary. Hence it may be assumed that the whole or a part of the Kao-fu or Kabul region was occupied by the Kuśāna. Before Kujula Kadphises, it was under Hermæus, the last Greek ruler of Kao-fu. We have found the coins of Hermæus alone firstly and then in association with Kujula Kadphises alone. All this indicates that firstly Hermæus was the ruler and was issuing his own coin, later the coins in association with Kujula Kadphises might have been issued by Kujula Kadphises to carry on the existing type of coins and introducing himself with them. The
the coins of Gondophares, the Parthian rulers have been found in a large number which suggests his dominance over these areas but it did not remain for a long time as indicated by the Hermaeus-Kujula type coins. The possibility is that Gondophares might have defeated Hermaeus who might have sought help from Kujula Kadphises. Kujula Kadphises, who had defeated the Parthians must have attacked the Kabul areas along with Hermaeus and occupied it.

The *Tsien Han-shu* mentions the Kabul region under the Yüeh-Chih. This statement of Pan-Ku is very significant as according to it Kabul or the Kao-fu area had come under the dominance of Kujula Kadphises before c. 24 CE which is the last date of the *Tsien Han-shu*. The *Hou-Han-shu* also states the victory of Kujula Kadphises over Kao-fu after the conquest of An-hsi. All this may roughly be placed somewhere around c. 15-20 CE.

Pu-ta has been identified by Franke and Harquart as the area north of Arachosia. Chavannes identifies it with Balkh and B.N. Mukherjee as Bactra in Western Bactria. Kujula Kadphises probably captured it from the Arsacids.

Chi-pin (Ci-pin) or Ki-pin has remained a controversial place to be identified. Beal and Tarn identify Chi-pin with Kabul and Smith calls it north Eastern Afghanistan. Chavannes and Levi identify it with Kashmir. B. N. Mukherjee and M. A. Steins also relate the name Chi-pin to Kashmir while Konow opines that it comprised the areas of Swat Valley and extended westward towards Arachosia.

As far as the views of Beal and Tarn are concerned, it is not possible to identify Chi-pin with Kabul because it has already been identified with Kao-fu. Chi-pin has been mentioned separately which means the area other than Kao-fu or Kabul. Chavannes, Levi, Mukherjee and Stein appear to be correct in identifying Chi-pin with Kashmir as the coins of Kujula Kadphises have been found in the

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north western regions of the Indian subcontinent including Chi-pin i.e., Kāśmīra.\textsuperscript{12}

Mukherjee considers Chi-pin as an administrative unit or the political jurisdiction which had within its limits a portion of north-western India.\textsuperscript{113} Hiuen Tsang calls the region as Kapin.\textsuperscript{114} The conquest of this region by Kujula Kadphises indicates that he had captured at least a section of the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent.

As far as Taxila region is concerned, Kujula Kadphises probably conquered it in c. 46 CE. Before him Phraotes, the Parthian king ruled Taxila at least upto June or July of c. 46 CE. The annexation of Taxila by Kujula Kadphises ended the rule of the Indo-Parthians in that region.\textsuperscript{115}

Thus it appears that Kujula Kadphises not only captured the Ta-hsia region and extended his authority to the north of the Oxus, but also conquered some other regions such as Kabul area, western Bactria, the Taxila region and parts of Kashmir region. Within a period of fifty years he had built a big empire of the little Kuei-shuang of his ancestors.

**Vima Kadphises**

According to the Chinese annals, Ch’iu-Chiu- Chüeh died at the age of more than eighty years and his son Yen-Kao-Chen succeeded him as a King.\textsuperscript{116}

The Rabatak inscription\textsuperscript{117} of year one of Kaniśka-I refers to the genealogy of the Kuṇānas starting from Kujula Kadphises upto Kaniśka-I. Earlier it was believed that Vima Kadphises was son and successor of Kujula Kadphises but the above said inscription adds one more member in the family as the son of Kujula Kadphises, father of V’ima Kadphises and grandfather of Kaniśka-I. The name of the person is read as Vima Taktu by N. Sims- Williams and Saddaśkana by B.N. Mukherjee.\textsuperscript{118}
He, however, is not given any royal title in this inscription which suggests that he may not have ruled as a co-ruler or as an independent king. It appears that he may have predeceased his father Kujula Kadphises. This was most probably the reason that the Chinese sources refer to Yen-kao-Chen as the son and successor of Kujula Kadphises. Moreover, we do not find any coin of Vima Taktu or Saddaškana which further strengthens the reason.

Hence the statement of the *Hou Han-shu* that Kujula Kadphises (Ch’iu-Chiu-Chüeh) was succeeded by Yen-Kao-Chen appears correct. Yen-Kao-Chen has been identified by most of the scholars with Vima Kadphises. On a large number of his coins, his name appears as Ooemo Kadphises. According to Fan-Ye, he (Yen-Kao-Chen) destroyed Tien-Chu or Shen-tu. Shen-tu is identified with Sindhu, the name of the country to the west of lower Indus. The *Hou Han-shu* has described the country as stretching up to Kao-fu on the western side, the western sea on the south-western side.

The above description indicates the conquest of Vima Kadphises (Yen-Kao-Chen) over the territory of Lower Indus and the extent of his empire up to Kabul on the west and Arabian Sea on the south-west. The *Hou Han-shu* further states that the Yüeh-Chih killed the king of Shen-tu and appointed generals there who governed in the name of Yuch-Chih.

*The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, while mentioning almost the same region refers to the struggle among the Parthian princes of Scythia. These may be the Indo-Parthians who were having a province in the lower Indus region. Most probably the region was wrested from the Indo-Parthian group of kings. Gondophares I seems to have been overpowered by Vima Kadphises as we find some copper coins of Gondophares I bearing a bust and Nike are re-struck by an “elephant rider” type most probably of Vima Kadphises. It, however, is not certain that Gondophares I was defeated by Vima Kadphises but the prevalence of the above said copper coins suggests that he might have been successful against
Godophares I and his group in the regions of Arachosia. The occupation may be permanent or temporary.\textsuperscript{127}

Marshall\textsuperscript{128} has found some silver coins of Gondophares, Pacores and Vima Kadphises at Taxila. The coins of Pacores bear his own portrait, the symbol of Gondophares and the legend of Sasas who uses the subordinate title “Great King”. Hence it may be said that Vima Kadphires might have ousted Pacores or his successors from the Taxila region.

As far as the epigraphic evidences are concerned, we have found a few inscription which are considered to be of Vima Kadphises, but still the scholars have doubts that either these actually belong to Vima Kadphises or some other ruler.

A rock inscription, engraved in Kharoṣṭhī letters, composed in Prākṛt, bearing the date 184 or 187 has been found at Khalastse, near Ladakh, near the Tibet-Kashmir border. It reads:

\begin{verbatim}
Sanh 1 100 20 20 20 20 4 (111)
Mahārājasa Uvima Kavthisasa
\end{verbatim}

It has been translated as the year 184 (or 187) (during the reign) of Mahārāja, the great king Uvima Kavthisa (or Vima Kadphises).\textsuperscript{129}

The next reference of Vima Kadphises may be mentioned in an inscription which marks the renovation of the devkula (the Kuṣāṇa imperial portrait shrine) at Māt, near Mathurā, during the reign of Huviśka, the Kuṣāṇa emperor.\textsuperscript{130}

The group of rocks in Hunza area bears several inscriptions indicating Kuṣāṇa rule. One of these inscriptions has been read as:

\begin{verbatim}
(Ma) Hārāja U (or DU) Vimo
(Ka) dhatapri (Sa)
\end{verbatim}
It has been translated as the great King U (or Du) Vimo (or Vima) Kadhatprisa.\textsuperscript{131}

On a rock near Dast-e-Nawur in Afghanistan, a Prākṛt inscription in Kharoṣṭhī character has been found. It refers to the King as Śāhi Vima Taksama (o) Kośāna.\textsuperscript{132} The Kuṣāṇa King mentioned in the Prākṛt record as Vima is referred to Ooemo in the Bactrian record.

Terracotta sealing with legend in Brāhmī characters has been found at Ganwaria in eastern Uttar Pradesh. The legend on it reads:

\textit{Kaphu – Putra – Vimasya}

It is translated as: Of Vima, son of Kaphu.\textsuperscript{133} Kaphu may possibly mean Kadphises.

Apart from these inscriptions, there are some other inscriptions which do not contain his name but had been assigned to his reign by scholars. Some of them are:

(1) The Panjatar inscription\textsuperscript{134} of the year 122 found at Panjatar. In this inscription the ruler is being described as Mahārāja Guśāna (The Kuṣāṇa King).

(2) The Kalawan Cooper Plate inscription of the year 134.\textsuperscript{135}

(3) The Taxila Silver Scroll inscription of the year 136.\textsuperscript{136}

The ruler is described as Mahārāja Rājātirāja Devaputra Kuśāna which means Great King, Supreme King of Kings, son of heaven, the Kuṣāṇa.

The era used in these inscriptions is not specified. They may be dated in the era beginning with c. 57 B.C. known as the Vikrama Era. The dates of the Khalaste inscription, the Panjatar inscription, the Kalawan inscription and the Taxila Silver Scroll inscription would thus be 130 or 127 CE, 65 CE, 77 CE and 79 CE.
Thus the prevalence of the inscriptions from Khalaste region up to Mathurā region definitely indicates a vast empire under Vima Kadphises.

Besides the epigraphic evidences, we have found a large number of coins of Vima Kadphises at different places such as at Begram, Taxila, Peshawar, Mathurā, BHITĀ, Gorakhpur (Kasia), Vārāṇasī and Indore etc. and the coins of his military officers have been found as far as Ghazipur (near Vārāṇasī) and Surashtra (Gujarat). These numismatic references are quite significant in determining the extent of his empire.

The Periplus contains references of India’s flourishing trade with Rome in which many cities such as Ozene (Ujjain), Kabul, Mathurā and Pāṭaliputra etc. were playing an important role. The author writes that during that early period through the city of Ozene and the port of Barygaza (Broach), a flourishing trade was carried out with Rome and there was complete safety of routes from Kabul to Mathurā, Ujjain and Broach.

All this indicates the political stability which means that the above said territories were under the control of one supreme power or its allies who maintained peace and security. This supreme power should be none other than Vima Kadphises as he was the ruler when the book was written (around c. 78 CE).

It is quite clear from the Kalawan inscription and the Taxila Silver Scroll inscription of year 134 (77 CE) and 136 (79 CE) and from the account of the Periplus that Vima ruled at least till (77 or 78 CE). But the question arises that when did Vima start ruling? The indication of this we get from a coin type of Vima Kadphises which seems to be an imitation of the coins of Gotarzes II, the Arsacid emperor. In this coin the king is shown sacrificing at an altar. Gotarzes II ruled from c. 38 to 51 CE. Hence the beginning of Vima’s rule should be placed between c. 38 to 51 CE. As we have discussed earlier that Kujula Kadphises had ruled upto at least c. 46 CE. If we accept the dates of Konow (c. 78
CE) and that of Ghirshman (c. 95 CE) it would be quite difficult for us to explain that why did Vima Kadphises imitate the standard of the Roman aureus of Augustus and his immediate successor, which during the above mentioned dates had been depreciated by the Roman emperor Nero. Hence Vima Kadphises might have ruled independently till c. 78 CE when Kaniska-I ascended to the throne.

**Soter Megas**

While dealing with the chronology of the Kuşanças, we can not merely ignore Soter Megas, a nameless king known by his titles on the coins issued by him.

A large number of coins bearing the title *Basileus Basileon Soter Megas* have been found in the region extending from Peshawar to Mathurā pointing towards a long reign and great power. The name of the king issuing these coins has not been mentioned except on a few coins which bear the title Basileus Basileon Soter Megas Vima (Ooemo) Kadphises. Hence these coins have been styled as of a nameless king. Most of the coins bear a Greek legend on the obverse and sometimes a Kharoṣṭhī legend on the reverse. Due to the absence of any name of the issuer, these coins have been classified as those of Soter Megas, which means the Great Saviour.

Who this Soter Megas was is still a mystery. Different scholars have ascribed these coins to Kujula Kadphises, to Vima Kadphises, governor of Kuşanças particularly of Vima Kadphises, to Kaniska-I and even an Indo-Parthian ruler.

The nameless King has issued following types of coins:

- **Class I** Horseman and Zeus type
- **Class II** Bust of the King and Horseman type
- **Class III** Bust of the King and Zeus type
Class IV Janiform bust and King at altar type

The coin of Soter Megas fall into the following two groups:\textsuperscript{153}

(I) With the Greek legend Basileus Basileon Soter Megas and with its literal transliteration into Kharoṣṭhī.

(II) Only with the Greek legend \textit{Basileus Basileon Soter Megas} translated as of the king of kings, the Great Saviour.

John Marshall\textsuperscript{154} considers Soter Megas as the Viceroy of Vima Kadphises as he writes that in Sirkap no specimen of the new gold coinage in the type “King standing at altar and Śiva with bull” has been found. Only thirteen specimens have been found which definitely indicate that after the conquest of Taxila Vima Kadphises built a new city named SirŠukh where the major part of the population got shifted. According to Marshall, for the same reason the coins of Soter Megas, a viceroy, as mentioned in the \textit{Hou Han-shu}, to govern his new Indian provinces, are very less (not more than a dozen) on the Sirkap site.

B. N. Puri\textsuperscript{155} considers him as a deputy of Vima Kadphises in the north as Nahapāna and Cašṭana is south-western India. He enjoyed autonomy of issuing coins following the pattern and style of his overlord with the initial letter \textit{VI} symbolizing the suzerainty of his overlord Vima Kadphises.

A. K. Narain\textsuperscript{156} says, “the nameless king was a Kušāna King and his coins belonged to the experimental phase of pre-Vima Kušāna coinage, to the period when the first Kušāna after copying all sorts of types and styles of coinage until during the later half of his reign when he assumed the grandiloquent titles, finally selected some fairly uniform types and issued coins with titles comparable to those which we find in the inscriptions.”

D. D. Mac Dowall,\textsuperscript{157} however has put forward another theory. He states, “the earlier coinage of Soter Megas follow the pattern of the coinage of Kujula and the Indo-Parthians in that they are local coinages based on the different types
and weight standard of pre-existing local coinages. Later, however, Soter Megas introduced a uniform and general coinage throughout the Kuṣāṇa territories which proved the basis of Vima’s copper issues. Thus he suggests that Soter Megas should be placed between Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises. He further advocates that the old view that the coins of Soter Megas were issued by a viceroy or viceroys of Vima is no longer tenable and he becomes a strong candidate for identification with the unnamed king with high royal titles but no personal name of the inscriptions of the Panjatar stone, the Kalawan Copper plate and the Chir Mound Taxila Silver Scroll.

Whitehead\textsuperscript{158} opines that the style of the coin, in copper only and the absence of the square from point to a period near about the Kuṣāṇa conquest making Soter Megas as contemporary of one of the two Kadphises rulers. The scholar also suggests that these coins were struck by more than one ruler and the different types present different localities though such rulers might have been subordinate to a single sovereign. Sten Konow\textsuperscript{159} also expresses the same view that the coins struck in copper were not issued by a sovereign but instead by a ruler acting to him on his behalf.

On the basis of fabric and epigraphy, Bhaskar Chattopadhyay\textsuperscript{160} has connected these coins with those of Mius which also had ‘reel and beed border’ and the occurrence of the horseman device and with those of Vima Kadphises as these coins bearing only title without name of the king show some similarities with the coins of Vima Kadphises for example the similarity in Greek letters like lunate sigma, small epsilon, large omega etc. and the similarity in Kharoṣṭhī letters like \textit{ma, ra, ja, da, ta} etc. He also points out a symbol on the coins of the nameless ruler which is almost similar to that used by Vima Kadphises. In this connection Rapson\textsuperscript{161} remarks that the symbol shown on the coins of the nameless king resembles to the symbol which is characteristic of Vima Kadphises and the possibility is that these may be related to him in a point of time.
John Marshall\textsuperscript{162} is of the opinion that there was an interval between Vima Kadphises and Kaniska-I and the coins of Soter Megas were issued during this interval and the coins bearing the \textit{aksara VI} chiefly represent the issues during Vima’s reign.

After the death of Vima Kadphises there are certain indications of the disintegration of Kuśāṇa empire according to him. For the Taxila inscription of the Year 191 i.e., c. 107-108 CE seems to show that Jihōnika i.e., Zeionises, the Kṣatrapa of Cakhṣa i.e., the Taxila country was then the actual ruler of Taxila which indicates the decline of Kuśāṇa power. He also points out that the script, language and design of Kaniska’s coins were different from the coins of Vima which also indications an interval.

The reformation of the metrology of Kuśāṇa coinage in the time of Vima Kadphises does not show or indicate any interregnum between Vima Kadphises and his father Kujula Kadphises then why we should presume that there was an interval between Vima and Kaniska’s reign as there is a reform in script and language of the coin legends of Kaniska-I. In fact, legends in Greek, not in Prākrit appear on some of Kaniska’s coins\textsuperscript{163} and so the adoption of the Bactrian language which is used on most of the Kaniska’s coins in place of Greek took place after the commencement of his reign. Hence we cannot say that such numismatic features indicate an interval.

If for the time being we consider him an independent emperor of the Kuśāṇa dynasty or an emperor who is not a Kuśāṇa then the problem arises that what should be his period of reign. We cannot put him after Vima Kadphises because of the absence of his gold coins which were issued by Vima Kadphises and his successors. Hence he should be placed before Vima Kadphises.

The symbol which is the characteristic feature of Soter Megas type may be noticed on a few coins of Kujula Kadphises without legend of Soter Megas. B. N. Mukherjee\textsuperscript{164} suggests that these were not issued by Kujula Kadphises rather were
countermarked with the symbol of Soter Megas by a striker who was contemporary of or posterior to Kujula Kadphises. Above all, the area of circulation of the coins is to be taken into consideration which was not occupied by Kujula Kadphises. Hence the nameless king may be placed after Kujula Kadphises but as we have already discussed that there is no sign of interregnum in the coinage of Vima Kadphises and his father Kujula Kadphises.

Beyond any doubt Vima Kadphises reformed the Kuśāṇa coinage most probably in three stages. It seems that firstly he minted copper coins on the weight standard of Attic tridrachms (or tetradrachms) of reduced weight and Attic drachms (same as the bull and camel type of his grandfather with inscription of Greek and Kharoṣṭḥī character. He also issued a second variety of “drachms” in copper (“enthroned king: two figures”) bearing legend in Greek character.

Finally Vima Kadphises introduced gold coinage on the Roman standard and copper pieces following the Attic metrology. The coins of final series bear Greek legends in Greek characters and Prākṛt legends in the Kharoṣṭḥī script. In a variety of copper coins only the Greek legend was used. Most probably while reforming the currency Vima Kadphises might have issued the coins of the called nameless king having the title of Soter Megas. These coins most probably were issued before the gold coins as we do not find any gold coin with the above said title. Although his name has not been mentioned on these coins but we have found a specimen with the Prākṛt inscription which read:

Mahārājasa Ṛājātirājasa Tratarasa Vamasa. The inscription indicates some relation of the issuer with Vima Kadphises as the last word indicates.

Cunningham had noted some peculiarities which were comon to the coins of Vima Kadphises and the nameless king.

1. Both use the same title of “Basileus Basileon Soter Megas” in the nominative case.
2. Both make use of circular margin composed of reels and pellets, in the place of the native legend.

3. Vima Kadphises holds a club upright before his face. The nameless king holds a scepter upright before his face.

4. Both use the same peculiar form the Gandhārian letters.

He further adds that the coins of both are common in the Kabul valley, throughout the Panjab and in north-western India as far as east in Benaras and Ghazipur. Thus most probably the Soter Megas coins were minted by Vima Kadphises before he fully reformed the metrology of his coinage.

Kaniška – I

Kaniška-I may be considered the greatest Kuṣāṇa monarch. Under him the dynasty reached at its climax or it was the period of climax of the Kuṣāṇa empire during the reign of Kaniška-I. Unfortunately enough his position in the Kuṣāṇa genealogy and chronology as a successor of Vima Kadphises had been subject of great controversy.

The scholars believed that Kaniška-I belonged to a separate family than those of Kadphises group and established an independent dynasty within the vast Kuṣāṇa empire in India. All this was assumed on the basis of following points:

(1) There is a difference in personal names between the first two Kuṣāṇa king who had the title Kadphises (or Kadphes) which Kaniška-I and his successors did not use.

(2) Kaniška group used the suffix ‘śka’ with their names i.e. Kaniška, Vasiška, Huviška etc.

(3) Kaniška-I and his successors gave up the Greek titulature and the Kharoṣṭhī legends which the first two rulers (Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises) had used on the reverse of their coins.\textsuperscript{167}
Thomas states that the Chinese annals referring to the two Kadphises rulers are silent regarding Kaniska. Although a few pieces of evidences from the Tibetan and Chinese sources, based on traditions recorded centuries later contain some references to Kaniska such as his relations with contemporary rulers of Khotan and other places in Central Asia, and finally his conquest of eastern India alone or in alliance with his ally or allies. Holstein is of the opinion that Kaniska-I belonged to Siao Yüeh-Chih or little Yüeh-Chih. Fleet, however thinks that the tribe of Kaniska came from Khotan to Kashmir and thence to India. Konow agreed with Fleet that Kaniska belonged to a separate clan, sect or ruling house of the Kusāṇas which came from Khotan to Kashmir and later entered India.

Now let us discuss a few arguments which Konow has taken into consideration to support his theories of Kaniska’s Khotanese origin.

In the Chinese translation of Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā of Kumārālāta, composed shortly after the reign of Kaniska, it is recorded that “in the family of the Kiu-ša there was a king called Cen-t’an Kia-ni-Ca. He conquered Toung Tien-tchou (Eastern India according to Levi) and pacified the country. His power spread fear; his good fortune was complete. He set out to return to his kingdom through a broad, flatland.”

Cen-t’an is Candana according to Levi but an old designation of Khotan according to Sarat Chandra Das. Levi further explains that the original Tcan-t’an or Cen-t’an would be Kashgar; and Tcen-t’an (Kaniska) would be Kaniska, King of Khotan. He says that he cannot avoid believing that the cradle of power of the Tukhāra-Turuškas to be found to be found in that region.

On the basis of the events recorded in Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā as stated above and the statement of the Mahārājanikanikalekha which says that king Kanika of the Kuśa race came from a northern country, Konow identifies Kanika with Kaniska.
and the northern country with Khotan. The original work which was in Sanskrit has been lost but its Tibetan version is embodied in the Tanjur Mdo XXXIII foll. 78-82; XCIV 295-99. Here King Kanika has been described as descendant of the solar dynasty.

Strange enough, this title has never been used by Kaniśka-I anywhere. Moreover, Māṛceta cannot be considered or identified with Aśvaghoṣa with quite certainty. Hence we cannot draw a correct conclusion regarding the northern country and Kaniśka as suggested by Konow.

Konow has taken into consideration the Tibetan sources which tell us that “King Kanika and the king of Guzan and King Vijayakṛśī, lord of Li (Khotan) and others led an army into India and overthrew the city of Soked (Sāketa).”

Konow has interpreted the statement as; Kanika (Kaniśka), the King of Guzan (Kuśana) led an expedition from Khotan into India. But if the above said king Kanika is the same Kaniśka then it is possible that he invaded India in association with Vijayakṛśī who ascended the throne after Vijayadharma (c. 240-264 CE) and Vijayasimha. This is a long time gap between the two.

The Hou Han-shu states that king Kien of Khotan was killed by the Chinese in c. 152 CE and “Kien” has been considered as an abbreviation of Kaniśka. But this abbreviation has never been used for in any other Chinese work.

Know further thought that the language of the legends of the coins of the group of Kaniśka-I was what later became known as Khotanese Śaka which was prevalent in Khotan in early centuries of Common Era.

But the language of the legends on most of the coins of Kaniśka-I is identical with that of the Surkh-Kotal inscription referring to him. This record is probably written in Bactrian. Above all we lack a definite evidence to show that Śaka was the common language of Khotan in early centuries of Common Era.
D. C. Sircar\textsuperscript{186} suggests that the dated epigraphs of the early years of Kaniska’s reign have been found in Uttar Pradesh region which, according to him, indicates the rise of him in that particular area. He assumes that Kaniška-I acted as a viceroy of Vima Kadphises and later captured the throne after defeating other viceroys. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya\textsuperscript{187} also expresses the same views.

The views of the scholars cannot be accepted because it not necessary that the issuing of the dated inscriptions from a particular area by a particular king indicates the conquest and annexation of the territories concerned to the King. He may issue the inscriptions in the territories which he has got in inheritance from his ancestors or he has conquered them sometimes earlier. Besides if the earlier dated records of Kaniška are found in Uttar Pradesh as stated earlier, it does not indicate at all that he firstly conquered the eastern India and later moved towards the western India and conquered it. In fact the Kuṣāṇas firstly conquered the north-western region as discussed earlier.

The discovery of the Rabatak inscription from the Afghanistan region has solved the puzzle of the issuing of the earliest inscription in the eastern India. The inscription as stated earlier belongs to the Afghanistan region and is being issued in year one. It his inscription he has mentioned various cities such as Koonadiano (Kaunḍīna, Kuṇḍīna), Ozene (Ujjayini), Zageda (Sāketa), Kozambo (Kauśāmbī), Palabotra (Pāṭaliputra) and Ziri-tambo (Śri-Campa)\textsuperscript{188}.

It is interesting to note that Kaniška-I did not mention the famous cities of the time such as Kaniškapura (Puruṣapura), Puṣkalāvati, Taṅkaśila (Taxila) and Mathurā (Mathura) etc. Hence it may be assumed that these had been in the Kuṣāṇa Empire before he ascended to the throne and the cities might have conquered by him later. The inscription first refers to the two cities in the southern directions. Indicated the southernmost extension of Kaniška’s empire the record speaks of the cities situated to the east and south-east of Mathurā. The Bhagalpur area formed the easternmost extent of the empire. If the whole area as noted above was not conquered by Kaniška-I in the very first year of his reign, it

\textsuperscript{186} D. C. Sircar
\textsuperscript{187} Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya
\textsuperscript{188}
or a substantial part of it might had been conquered before the starting of his own era.

John Marshall\textsuperscript{189} believes that the script, language and design of Kaniška’s coins were different from those of the species of Vima and hence indicate an interval between the two. R. Ghirshman\textsuperscript{190} also supports the theory and he further adds that during this interval the family of Kaniška-I, Soter Megas of the coins and the western Kṣatrapas became independent in Kashmir, Kapišā and Ujjain region respectively. The views of the two eminent scholars, however, do not appear quite convincing. In fact the legends on the same coins of Kaniška-I appears in Greek rather in Prākrit.\textsuperscript{191} The adoption of the Bactrian language in place of the Greek on most of Kaniška-I’s coins is evident after the beginning of his reign as clearly stated by him in Rabatak inscription that he replaced the use of Greek by the Āryan or the Bactrian language.\textsuperscript{192}

Hence these numismatic features do not show any interval at all. As stated earlier in this chapter while discussing the problem of the nameless king, that if there is no sign of interval between the periods of Kujuāla Kadphises and Vima Kadphises, when the latter reformed the currency, then whey should such interval be there in the time of Kaniška.

At last we shall discuss a few other references to Kaniška-I such as the Hou Han-shu refers to Tung-li with its capitall Sha-chi as having been conquered by the Ta-Yüeh-Chih.\textsuperscript{193} The Tibetan work Li-yul-gayi-lo-rgyus points out that Kanika, identifiable with Kaniška-I conquered the region of Soked.\textsuperscript{194} It appears that Sha-Chi and Soked must be Sāketa.\textsuperscript{195} If both these sources are referring to the same place then it becomes quite clear that Kaniška-I belonged to the group of the Great Yüeh-Chih or Ta Yüeh-Chih. His association with the family of the Ta-Yüeh-Chih or the great or the imperial Kuśāṇas may be confirmed from the following sources:
1. A dedicatory inscription found at Mat near Mathura strongly indicates that Huviska’s grandfather was Vima. Hence there is a gap of only one generation between Huviska and Vima Kadphises. As we know that Huviska definitely came after Kaniska-I as he is using the dates or era started by Kaniska whose dates range from the year I to year 23. The dates of Huviska vary from year 28 to year 60.

2. There is a story about Kaniska in a Khotanese manuscript from Tun-huang, which states, “in Bahulka (Bahlaka in Tokharistan) Itahvarashtanima (i.e. in the district of Bahlaka, in Tokharistan) there arose in the family of imperial rulers, a brave, meritorious, intelligent King of Jambudvīpa by name of Candra Kanaiska. The King with many hundred thousands of troops and relying on his own bodily strength was in command of the continent of Jambudvīpa”. Hence he belonged to the family of Ta-Yüeh-Chih or the great Yüeh-Chih because the Little Yüeh-Chih has never been reported in Tokharistan, to which region Candra Kanaiska or Kaniska is mentioned in the story. As far as mention of the little Yüeh-Chih in the Chinese and Tibetan texts in concerned, it is because the little Yüeh-Chih when the readers of Kumārjiva’s (Mahāprajñāparamitā-sūtra)-śāstra) translation in contemporary China were expected to know.

P.C. Bagchi points out that there is no reason to think that Kaniska was a little Yüeh-Chih. The little Yüeh-Chih had lost their identity amongst the barbarous south-eastern China. Besides, this, Little Yüeh-Chih has no connection with Ta-hia (Tukhara) or with the Kuei-shuang (Kuśāṇas).

Above all the Rabatak inscription clearly mentions the Kuśāṇa genealogy as in line 11-14 it states, that Kujula Kadphises is the great grandfather, Oomi (Vima Taktu) or (Saddaśkana) is the grandfather and Vima Kadphises is the father of Kaniska.
Thus it becomes very clear that Kaniska-I belonged to the greater Yüeh-Chih or the imperial Kuṣāṇas and not to the branch of the Little Yüeh-Chih as supposed by many scholars.

**Date of Kaniska-I**

Among the biggest puzzles of the early history of India and particularly of the Kuṣāṇas is that regarding the date of Kaniska-I. The root cause of the problem is the lack of references in the literary sources particularly the Chinese sources regarding his date. The situation is worsened by the fact that the Kaniṣka group of rulers did not write the saṅvat or era on their inscriptions.

Since the discovery of his coin, the issue has become more controversial. Since then several scholars have put forward their theories to solve this problem but unfortunately enough none of the theories has got general acceptance. Either they have been criticised by the scholars or have been proved obsolete with the discovery of new evidences.

Three international conferences have been organized till now on this issue. First in 1913 in London, second in 1964 again in London and third in 1986 in USSR. Different scholars have expressed their views on this issue. The dates suggested by scholars may be categorized in four categories for our convenience.

1. In the 1st century B.C.
2. In the 3rd century CE
3. In the 2nd century CE
4. In the 1st century CE

**1. In the 1st Century B.C.**

This theory was propounded by Alexander Cunningham and was followed by Fleet, Dowson, Kennedy, Pulleyblank and Barnett etc. All of them assumed that:

1. Kaniṣka-I started an era in 58 B.C. So he is founder of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty.
2. They held the view that Kaniska was the predecessor of Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises and that he had ascended the throne in 58 B.C.

3. In the first century B.C. silk trade was carried on between India and China. Plenty of gold which was procured from this trade was used to issue gold coins.

The views cannot be justified as:

1. There is no connection of Kaniska-I with Vikrama samvat. The samvat upto c. 8th CE was not known Vikram samvat but as krt samvat or Mālava samvat. The name Vikrama was associated with Candragupta II Vikramāditya of the Gupta dynasty in the c. 8th CE.

2. Kujula Kadphises as is known from literary and numismatic sources, ruled in north-west frontier province and Vima Kadphises ruled upto Mathurā and Kaniska-I is said to have ruled from Central Asia to at least Benaras. He also said to have attacked Pātaliputra.

3. From the coins, we know that the coins of Kujula Kadphises are of copper while the coins of Vima Kadphises and Kaniska-I are of gold. This shows that with increasing economic prosperity the Kuśāna kings issued gold coins. If we assume that Kaniska-I was predecessor of Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises, then we must accept that the Kuśāna kings firstly issued gold coins which does not seem possible.

Rapson opines that at several places coins of Kaniska are found with coins of Vima Kadphises not with Kujula Kadphises which again shows that Kujula Kadphises was predecessor of Kaniska-I not vice-versa. Marshall’s excavation at Taxila has revealed that the coins of the Kadphises group were found at lower level and those of the Kaniska group at the upper level. This stratification has clearly demonstrated that the two Kadphises ruled earlier than Kaniska-I. Above all Kaniska-I himself in his Rabatak inscription has very clearly referred to his relations with the two Kadphises as we have discussed earlier.
Allan\textsuperscript{215} opines that the gold coins of Kaniśka-I bear the impact of coins of Roman emperor Titus (c. 79-81 CE) and Trajan (c. 98-117 CE). It means Kaniśka-I should be placed around these dates.

Thus the above discussion proves that c. 58 B.C. cannot be the date of accession of Kaniśka-I.

2. **In Thrid Century CE**

R. C. Majumdar\textsuperscript{216} has proposed c. 248 CE as Kaniśka’s date of accession. In 1913 in the first international council on the date of Kaniśka-I, the age of Kalcuri-Cedi era was coined by Majumdar which started in c. 248 CE and Majumdar says that Kaniśka-I was the starter of the era. He argues that Alexander invaded India in c. 326 B.C., the Mauryas ruled upto c. 185 B.C., after them came the Śuṅgas, Yavanas and the Śakas at least for forty generations which should be around c. 248 or 250 CE.

In the same way R. G. Bhandkar\textsuperscript{217} has proposed c. 278 CE as Kaniśka’s date of accession. He has been supported by Zevmal.\textsuperscript{218}

The theory may be rejected on the following grounds:

1. The Śakas, Yavanas and Kuśānas did not rule consecutively.

2. If the date of Kaniśka’s accession is c. 248 CE or c. 278 CE as proposed by the learned scholars then the date of Vāsudeva II, whose date 98 is considered last till now, goes around c. 346 or c. 376 CE respectively which is not possible because the inscriptions of Vāsudeva II\textsuperscript{219} indicate that he had Mathurā region under him but around c. 346 CE or c. 376 CE. The region was under the Nagas and Yandheyas who were later subjugated by Samudragupta, the Gupta monarch.\textsuperscript{220}

3. The Tibetan traditions as mentioned earlier mention Kaniśka as a contemporary of Vijayakīrtī of Khotan who flourished around c. 120 CE\textsuperscript{221}
4. The Chinese *Tripitaka* states that An-shih Kāo (c. 148-170 CE)\(^{222}\) translated the *Mārgabhūmi-Sūtra* of Sāṅgharakṣa who was contemporary of Kaniṣṭha.

Hence Kaniṣṭha’s date of accession cannot be put in the third century CE as suggested by the scholars.

3. In the Second Century CE

Scholar such as Smith\(^{223}\) (c. 120-160 CE) Sten Konow and Van Wijk\(^{224}\) (c. 128-129 CE), J. Marshall\(^{225}\) (c. 125-134 CE), R. Ghirshman\(^{226}\) (C 144 CE), J. Rosenfield\(^{227}\) (c. 110-115 CE), R. Göbl\(^{228}\) (c. 144 CE), P. L. Gupta\(^{229}\) (c. 144 CE), D. W. Macdowall\(^{230}\) (c. 128-129 CE), A. K. Narain\(^{231}\) (c. 103 CE), F. R. Allchin\(^{232}\) (c. 105-118 CE) and A. A. Macdonell\(^{233}\) (c. 125 CE) etc. consider the beginning of Kaniṣṭha’s rule in the second century CE. They argue that Kujula Kadphises conquered Kabul around c. 50 CE and ruled for approximately 50 years and then came Vima Kadphises who rule upto c. 120-125 CE. After him succeeded Kaniṣṭha-I. This is also assumed that firstly Kujula Kadphises then Vima Kadphises and after Vima, Soter Megas ruled and then came Kaniṣṭha-I who is thus pushed forward to second quarter of second century CE.

In this context we have references in Chinese sources of Pan-Cao\(^{234}\) a famous Chinese general who was deputed by the Chinese emperor to conquer the states of Central Asia, like Yarkand, Kashgar, Khotan and Kucha etc. He was active between c. 73-102 CE. The scholars believe that if Pan-Cao was there how Kaniṣṭha-I could conquer the above mentioned territories, The Chinese sources do not record a clash between the two. The *Hou Han-Shu* does not refer to Kaniṣṭha-I Why?

The answer is simple. It is Chinese as well as Indian tradition not to record events which goes against their king and country, for example Central Asian states Kucha, Yarkand, Khotan etc. were not under China and is also said that these states had accepted suzerainty of Kuṣāṇas and had sent their embassies to
the Kuśāṇa court. This was the reason of the attack of Pan-Cao on these states. Pan-Cao is said to have sought help of Kuśāṇa king who in turn demanded the hand of Chinese princess which indicates that the Kuśāṇa king should be Kaniska-I because both the Kadphises were too old if alive to demand hand of Chinese princess. So Kaniska-I cannot be put in second century CE.

Roman Ghirshman, a French archaeologist excavated the famous site of Begram. On the basis of the excavation, he writes that Begram was destroyed by Sassanian rulers in c. 241 CE. He states that coins from the uppermost layer of Begram are coins of Vāsudeva I. They were gold coins. Ghirshman calculates date of Kaniska-I by deducting last date of Vāsudeva I i.e. 98 from c. 241 CE as 241-98=144 which according to him should be the date of Kaniska-I. But the theory cannot be accepted on the following grounds:

1. Śapūr’s ancestor Ardašir ruled up to 242 CE.
2. There is no evidence of destruction of Begram by Śapūr I.
3. It is not definite whether Śapūr I was ruling in c. 241 CE or not.
4. Vāsudeva (I) whose coins have been reported, we have no evidence that he was Vāsudeva I or II or III. An inscription which is in San Francisco Museum shows that in c. 165 CE Vāsudeva was ruling. He cannot be Vāsudeva I as one cannot rule for 98 years. Hence he should be Vāsudeva II not I. So naturally date of Kaniska-I will come down.

The Chinese sources say that Po-Tio (Vāsudeva) sent an embassy to the Chinese emperor in c. 230 CE whether he was Vāsudeva I or II is not clear. So without any strong evidence we cannot accept the theory of Ghirshman. We even cannot accept the date of Kaniska after c. 120 CE as Junagarh inscription of Rudradāman I of the year 72 of Śaka era i.e. around c. 150 CE clearly mention that Rudradāman I had sovereignty over the areas of Sindhu Sauvira in c. 150 CE.
A large number of coins of Vāsudeva were found in Mohanjo-daro which shows that Kuśāṇas were ruling over Sindh.²⁴⁰ Rudradāman states that he did not owe his position as Mahākaśatrapa to anybody else but has acquired it with his own powers (svayam adhigata Mahākaśatrapa nāma).

But the Sui Vihār inscription of year 11²⁴¹ of Kaniṣṭha-I states that he (Kaniṣṭha-I) had sovereignty over Sindhu and Sauvira.

If Kaniṣṭha-I ruled in the middle the second century CE how is it possible that two rulers are ruling the same region at the same time. Secondly Rudradāman-I states that he defeated Yaudheyas. These people were residing mostly in the areas of Punjab and Haryana.²⁴² But Kaniṣṭha-I, and Huviṣka ruled from Central Asia upto Benaras. So it is not possible for the Yaudheyas to be independent during Kaniṣṭha-I’s time. If we deduct last date of Rudradāman-I, i.e., c. 150 CE, we get 127 which means we cannot keep Kaniṣṭha-I beyond c. 127 CE.

We have found two inscriptions of years. 2²⁴³ and year 6²⁴⁴ of Kaniṣṭha-I from Kauśāmbi (Kosam) which indicate that Kaniṣṭha-I was ruling over Kauśāmbi. If the date of Kaniṣṭha-I is c. 144 CE then the above said inscriptions will be of c. 146 CE and c. 150 CE respectively.

From Kauśāmbi, a large number of seals have been found in the name of Maghas dating between 81-159 Śaka era²⁴⁵ which means 81+78 = 159 CE. If Maghas were ruling over Kauśāmbi during this period, how could Kaniṣṭha-I rule at the same time? If Kaniṣṭha-I was ruling in c. 78 CE then the dates are: 78+2=80, 78+6=84 and in the case of Maghas it is c. 159 CE and Vāsudeva was ruling when the areas of the Kuśāṇas were shrinking. The most important thing is that Kaniṣṭha’s date 1-23, Vasiṣṭha’s dates 24-28, Huviṣka’s date 28-60 and Vāsudeva’s dates 67-98²⁴⁶ suggest a continuous rule. Hence Kaniṣṭha-I should be the starter of on era which was followed by his successors. But we know that no new era was started in the second century CE. So we cannot put Kaniṣṭha-I in second century CE.
4. In the First Century CE, i.e., c. 78 CE.

This theory has been propounded and supported by many western as well as Indian scholars such as Thomas,\(^{247}\) Oldenberg,\(^{248}\) Bachofener,\(^{249}\) Rapson,\(^{250}\) Fergusson,\(^{251}\) J. E. Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw\(^{252}\), Eggermont\(^{253}\) Marieq\(^{254}\) Waddell\(^{255}\) Dani\(^{256}\), Raychaudhuri\(^{257}\), R. D. Banerjee\(^{258}\), D. C. Sircar\(^{259}\), J. N. Aggarwla, J. N. Banerjee\(^{260}\), S. Chattopadhyaya\(^{261}\) and B. N. Mukherjee\(^{262}\) etc.

Jouveau-Dubreuil,\(^{263}\) however does not agree with this view on the following grounds:

1. Kujula Kadphises ascended to the throne in c. 50 CE. If we accept Kaniska’s date of accession in c. 78 CE there would be only 28 years left for Kadphises I and II.

2. The Taxila silver Scroll inscription, speaking of Mahārāja, Rājātirāja, Devaputra Kuśāṇa is dated 136 which is generally ascribed to the Vikrama Era and therefore is equivalent to \((136-58=78)\) c. 78 CE. He says that this inscription belonged to Vima Kadphises, because according to the Chinese sources, he was the first Kuśāṇa ruler to conquer any part of India.

3. He further states that Sten Konow has shown that the Tibetan and Chinese documents tend to prove that Kaniska reigned in the second century CE.

All these objections can easily be dispensed with the following argument:

(1) It is not certain that Kujula Kadphises ascended to the throne in c. 50 CE. Presuming that he did, the period of 28 years is not unreasonable for the two Kadphises especially when we know that Kadphises I had died at the age of more than eighty. In that case his own son or successor must have had a short reign. The use of the word Devaputra makes it extremely doubtful that the Kuśāṇa king mentioned in the Taxila Silver Scroll inscription was Vima, for we know that this title was used by Kaniska group\(^{264}\) and not by the Kadphises group.
Regarding the Sten Konow’s references, it may be said that the King Kaniska, referred to may have been Kaniska of the Ārā inscription of the year 41, which, if referred to the Śaka era, would give a date in the second century CE. Po-t’iao, whom Sten Konow has mentioned as the King of Yüeh-Chih having sent an ambassador to China in c. 230 CE, may have been one of the successors of Vāsudeva I. Konow himself, Smith and R. D. Banerjee recognize the existence of more than one Vāsudeva.

Under these circumstances the view of Dubreuil seems incorrect and the theory of c. 78 CE appears correct.

B.N. Mukherjee has accepted c. 78 CE as the date of Kaniska’s accession to the throne. He argues that the Hou Han-shu states that, Yen-Kao-Chen (Vima Kadphises) conquered the areas of Shen-tu (Sindhu) which registers the presence of Kuśāṇas in Sindhu region.

In Mohenjo-daro, as stated earlier, 1438 coins (copper) of Vāsudeva I have been found. Along with this we have got coins from Jhukar and Sui Vihar of the same region which shows the sovereignty of the Kuśāṇas on these areas. This indicates that the Kuśāṇas must have conquered these areas between the concluding years of Vima Kadphises and initial years of Vāsudeva I because we do not find any evidence of Huviṣka’s rule beyond year 60 of Kaniska-I’s era. This shows that Sindhu was under Kuśāṇas upto year 60 of Kaniska-I’s era if not beyond.

The Junagarh Rock inscription of Rudradāman I shows that in 72 Śaka era (c. 150 CE) he has sovereignty over Sindhu-Sauvira areas. So Kuśāṇa hegemony over these areas should be at least upto c. 149-150 CE.

Kujula Kadphises had seized Kabul (Kao-fu) from the Parthians. We know that Kabul was under Parthians after the Indo-Greeks and before the Kuśāṇas. It is also clear that the Parthian influence over Kabul was upto 1st century B. C. and their sovereignty ended in 1st century B. C. So it is clear that Kujula Kadphises
had brought Kabul under his control in the 1st century B.C. or before. It is also clear that Kujula Kadphises conquered Parthians after conquering four other small states and established Kuei-shuang (Kuśāṇa) dynasty.

Vima Kadphises is said to have conquered Sindhu area where the rule of Kuśāṇa dynasty ended in year 61 i.e., c. 139-140 CE. So we have to keep the 60th year of Kaniṣka’s era before c. 149-150 CE. The first year of Kaniṣka’s *saṃvat* cannot be kept beyond 89-90. Above all, if we concentrate on the opinion of scholars that first year of Vāsudeva I is 64-67 and he ruled for some years then first year of Kaniṣka’s rule must be around c. 80 CE.

Mukherjee refers to the statute lying in San Francisco Museum, which reads that the image was installed in year 170 by Vāsudeva which cannot be years of Vāsudeva I because if we add 170 to c. 144 CE, we get c. 314 CE which does not seem appropriate because Guptas had started their rule during this period. If we add 170 to 78 then we get 248 which can be date of Vāsudeva because in Chinese sources it is written that Po-T’iao sent embassy to China as mentioned earlier in c. 240 CE. He cannot be Vāsudeva I.271

Naqsh-I-Rustam inscription272 of c. 262 CE belongs to Śāpur I. In this inscription it is written that he had jurisdiction over Peshawar or Puruṣapura. If Śāpur I is correct it means that after the decline of the Kuśāṇas or by defeating them he could have got it. If we deduct 170 from 262, we get 92 which is near to c. 78 CE.

Dani has discovered Campbail inscription273 of the year 20. It speaks of *Mahārāja Rājāṭirāja Devaputra Kaniṣka* and is dated in the year 20. On the basis of date of inscription, Kaniṣka can be identified with Kaniṣka-I.

The Rabatak inscription274 of Kaniṣka-I refers to the cities as far as Campā (Āṅga) in eastern Bihar and Kauṇḍinya and Ujjayini in the Deccan under his control. He clearly mentions that he was son and successor of Vima Kadphises who ruled appropriately from c. 46 CE to c. 77 or 78 CE. Vima is said to have
conquered the lower Indus region and the Kuśāṇas almost totally lost control over these regions when Mahākṣatrapa Rudradāman I was ruling in the Surashtra region as he mentions in his Junagarh inscription dated 72 = c. 149-150 CE which means that Kaniska-I may be put between c. 78 CE – c. 150 CE.

Above all, the Rabatak inscription confirms that Kaniska –I started a system of counting dates most probably after becoming an independent sovereign as the inscription belongs to year one. We know that only the Śaka era falls between the years c. 77 CE and c. 150 CE. The date of the Kuśāṇa kings right from Kaniska-I, such as, Kaniska-I, 1-23, Vasiśka, 22-28, Huviska 28-60, Vāsudeva, 67-98, as recorded in their inscriptions follow a particular era or sarīvat which must have been started by Kaniska-I, as he has the year one. This should be the Śaka era of c. 78 CE which was most probably started by Kaniska-I.

From Taxila excavations done by Marshall we get evidence that Kaniska-I came after both Kadphises to ascend the throne. The reign of the both Kadphises ended in first century CE and not beyond that. Hence we may conclude that Kaniska I started his rule in c. 78 CE.

Thus we may safely say that Vima Kadphises was succeeded by Kaniska-I, the greatest Kuśāṇa emperor in c. 78 CE. Earlier the relation between the two was not known but with the discovery of the Rabatak inscription it has become very clear that Vima Kadphises was father of Kaniska I as the epigraph clearly mentions him Kaniska’s father.275

Kaniska-I had got a big empire extending from Afghanistan region upto Mathurā in the east and the lower Indus region in the south in inheritance from his predecessors. In his very first regnal year, he has issued the Rabatak inscription which contains the orders given by him to the rulers, the governors or the incharge of the cities such as Koonadeano (Kauṇḍinya), Ozene (Ujjain), Zagedo (Sāketa), Kozambo (Kauśāmbī), Palabotro (Pāṭaliputra) and Ziritambo (Śri-Campā).
With this statement of Kaniska I in the Rabatak inscription the question however, arises that at what capacity he is issuing the orders to the heads of these cities? were they already under the Kuśāṇa empire? or they were subdued by him? The question here is not of the victory over these states or cities but is the time as he has issued the inscription in his very first year as mentioned earlier.

To find out the answer we shall have to analyse the cities and the respected regions in which they fall and some other areas in the vicinity of these cities.

As far as the extent of the Kuśāṇa empire in the eastern India is concerned, we know that it was at least upto Mathurā during the reign of Vima Kadphises. Regarding Kaniska’s expansion as stated earlier, we have a reference in the Tibetan work the Li-yul-gyi-lo-rgyus that king Kanika, the King of Guzan and the Li ruler, king Vigayakirti and others led an army into India and captured a city named Soked. This Soked has been identified with Saket which falls in the Fyzabad district of Uttar Pradesh.276

The Śrāvastī region, modern Sahat-Mahet, 277 lying in the border region between the districts of Gonda and Bahraich of Uttar Pradesh was in the empire of Kaniska-I as is indicated by an inscription from this region which records an act of merit done in the reign of Kaniska-I by a monk at Śrāvastī.278 Kaniska-I most probably won the region from local rulers whose name ended into deva or datta as the local coins ranging from second century B.C. or first century CE suggest.279 The Ayodhyā inscription of Dhanadeva280 belonging to the first century CE may be assigned to this group.

Kozambo or Kauśāmbī has been identified with modern Kosam in the Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh, 281 Here we have found the inscription of year 2 and year 6 of the reign of Kaniska-I. Besides we have also found a seal impression and a few pedestal inscriptions referring to him. 282 Some coins were also found in the excavation conducted at Kauśāmbī which bear the names of the
issuer ending in mitra indicating conquest of Kauśāmbī from the rulers whose name ended in mitra.  

At Sārnāth, there were found a few inscriptions of Kaniṣṭha-I corresponding to regnal year 3. One of which records a meritorious act at Bārānasi (Vārānasi) by a Bhikṣu called Bala along with Kṣatrapa Kharapallana and Kṣatarapa Vanaspara. Another inscription of the same regnal year at Sārnāth speaks of installation of an image by Mahākṣatrapa Kharapallana and Kṣatrapa Vanaspara on the behalf of Bala.

Śriddharmapiṭakaṇidānasūtra, the Chinese translation of which was rendered to in c. 472 CE mentions the defeat of the king of Pāṭaliputra by the king of Yūhe-Chih. The latter is said to have demanded a large indemnity of nine hundred pieces of gold. To pay off this heavy indemnity, the king of Pāṭaliputra gave his conqueror the Buddha’s bowl, Aśvaghoṣa and miraculous cock. This Yūhe-Chih king should be Kaniṣṭha-I as we have evidences that Kaniṣṭha and Aśvaghoṣa were contemporaries.

It appears that Kaniṣṭha-I did not annex Pāṭaliputra as he is said to have returned happily with the presents. Some Scholars on the basis of the findings of Kuśāṇa coins in the regions of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa such as at Tamluk, Murshidabad, Bogra and Mahasthan in Bengal, Mayurbhanj and Śiśupālagarh in Orissa, Buxor and Pāṭaliputra in Bihar try to mark the extent of Kuśāṇa empire in these regions but we cannot say with certainty that the Kuśāṇa empire extended upto these territories because the coins may be carried to these territories for trade purposes or day to day transactions during the Kuśāṇa rule or later. Above all we do not find any inscription of any Kuśāṇa emperor in these regions.

Ziri-Tambo is generally identified by the scholars with Śrī-Campā, located in the area of Champapura or Champanagar in east Bihar. We do not get any definite evidence of the Kuśāṇa presence in this region except the mention of the city in the Rabatak inscription.
The reference to Koonadeano, identified with Kaundinyapura on the Wardha river in Maharashtra²⁸⁹ and Ozeno, identified with Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh²⁹⁰ indicates the exploits of Kaniśka-I in the Deccan. The lower Indus region was conquered by Vima Kadphises and the Sui Vihar inscription of year 11²⁹¹ of Kaniśka I testifies that it was still in the Kuśāṇa domain.

A passage in the Rgya-gar-Cos-hbyun²⁹² of Tārāṇāth states that king Kanika was the sovereign in the land of Tili and Mālava. In this passage Mālava may be the same as Malwa and Kanika is identified with Kaniśka-I.²⁹³ Ākara was a part of this region²⁹⁴ over which Gantamiputra Śātakarṇi (mentioned as the master of Ākara in the Nasik Cave inscription of Gautami Balaśri, his mother)²⁹⁵ of the Sātavāhana dynasty and Rudradāman-I (in his Junagarh inscription of the year 72)²⁹⁶ claim their sovereignty. Ākara is considered the region in eastern Malwa²⁹⁷ which included the region of Sānci. The Kuśāṇa hegemony over the region is indicated by the inscription of Vās Kuśāṇa (Vasiśka Kuśāṇa) of the year 22 found at Sānci.²⁹⁸ The date of the inscription is in the Kaniska era of c. 78 CE. The place must have been inched in the Kuśāṇa empire during the time of Kaniśka-I as he ruled at least upto during the time of Kaniśka-I as he ruled at least upto year 23. It is quite possible that this region might have been acquired by the Kuśāṇas from the Sātavāhanas as a legend in a Chinese treatise called the Yu-Yang- tsar- tsu, composed by Tuan-Cheng-Che narrates a story of a successful campaign of Kaniśka-I against king So-t’o-p’o- hen (or Sātavāhana) of south India²⁹⁹

The north-western region which he had got in inheritance was still an integral part of his empire as is evident with the findings of his inscriptions in this very region such as Shāh-ji-ki-ṛheri³⁰⁰ inscription (Peshawar), the inscription from Zeda³⁰¹ (near Und) and Manikiala (Rawalpindi District)³⁰² etc.

The Kāśmīra (Kashmir) region was well under him if the information of Hieun-Tsang regarding the Buddhist council is correct.³⁰³ If it is so then Kāśmīra or a part of it should be in the Kaniśka’s empire. Kalhana³⁰⁴ has also mentioned
the names of three Kuşâna (Turuška) kings namely Huška, Juška and Kaniška who built three towns. This statement of Kalhaṇa testifies the Kuşâna and particularly Kaniška’s presence in Kāšmīra.

Śri Dharma-piṭaka-Sampradāyanidāna contains a passage which refers to his victory over the Parthian King. It states, “The King of the Ngan-si (Pahlava or Parthian) was a stupid and of a violent nature. At the head of the four forces, he attacked Ki-ni-tca (Kaniška) who defeated him and slew nine hundred thousand men”. The name of the Parthian king however is not mentioned, yet he should be Pacorus as in c. 75 CE, the Parthian empire was overrun by the Alani, who were a nomadic people. Volagases was the Parthian emperor. In c. 77 CE Volagases ended his life and was succeeded by Pacorus.

B. N. Mukherjee draws our attention towards the Naqsh-i-Rustam inscription of the Sassanian emperor Šāpūr I which speaks of his authority over the Kuşânaşahr (Kushanshahr) stretching up to the frontiers of K’ṣh (Kashgar) Swgd (Sogdiana) and Sh’sh (Tashkent).

The statement in the inscription implies that when Šāpūr I captured these regions, these were under the Kuşânas as he calls them Kuşânaşahr. We do not find any major conquests of the Kuşâna emperor after Kaniska-I. Hence these territories should be in the Kuşâna empire during the reign of Kaniska-I.

A Khotanese manuscript refers to him as a king of Bahulakavaśaya in Ttahvarasthaima which means Balkh was also a part of his empire. Ladakh region was definitely under the Kuşânas as we have found an inscription from Khalatse region belonging to year 187 most probably of the time of Vima Kadphises.

A. H. Franke suggests that Baltistan and eastern and western Turkestan were parts of Kuşâna Empire during the time of Kaniška. He says, “Regarding Turkestan, we may say with a great amount of certainty that Kashgar, Khotan and Kucha were parts of the empire. In favour of this view, we may state that coins of
the Kuṣāṇa emperors are found in very great quantities in Khotan and a few in
Kashgar. But also from the north (Kucha) several were brought by the German
expedition". He further states the appearance of the title Ā-mā-Cāh “Amāya" in
Turkestan and Baltistan is of great importance as it must have been granted by an
Indian monarch as the title is definitely Indian one. The Chinese, when later
reoccupied the region of Khotan altered the title to A-ma-ca. Franke refers to
Cunningham saying that in the genealogical tree of these Dukes given by
Cunningham, the title or name A-ma-ca is connected with the very first of them.
This, according to him, appears to mean that in the time of Kaniṣṭha I, this tribe of
Baltis was under the sovereignty of the Kuṣāṇa.\textsuperscript{311}

As far as Kaniṣṭha’s relations with China are concerned, it is said that
Kuṣāṇas earlier had cordial relation with China as they had helped Chinese in
invading Kiu-Che (Uch-Turfan). But later around c. 88-90 CE Yüeh-Chih sent an
ambassador to demand a Chinese princess in marriage. This was a turning point
in their relation as Sylvain Levi states, “Chinese general Pan-Cao stopped and
sent back the ambassador. The King of Yüeh-Chih raised an army under the
orders of the vicerory Sie. Pan-Cao’s troops were affrighted at the number but he
made them see that the enemy, worn out by a long march, and by the fatigue
endured in crossing the Tsong-ling mountains was not in a condition to attack
them with advantage. Sie was vanquished, and the king of the Yüeh-Chih did not
fail to send every year the tribute imposed upon him.\textsuperscript{312}

Levi, however, believes that it was not Kaniṣṭha-I but a successor of him
who could have consented to such humiliation at the hands of Chinese but as we
have discussed earlier that Pan-Cao was contemporary of Kaniṣṭha-I Besides, two
Buddhist works\textsuperscript{313} mention Kaniṣṭha-I and his three intimate friends namley Ma-
ming-Pousa (Aśvaghoṣa), Ma-tcha-lo (Maṭṭara, his prime minister), and Ce-lo-
kia (Caraka), a famous physician. The works also contain the information of the
difficulties faced by the soldiers of Tcen-tan-ki-“tca” (devaputra Kaniṣṭha) sent for
an expedition in north, in crossing the Ts’oung-ling mountains and the ultimate failure of the expedition. Hence he should be Kaniska-I.

Kaniska’s vast empire was divided into satrapies as is evident from the names of his Kṣatrapas found in the inscriptions in his different satrapies such as Kṣatrapas Kharapallana and Vanaspara (Sarnath inscription), Liaka (Zeda inscription), Veśpasi (Manikiala record) etc. In the parts of the western and Deccan of his empire Caṭana was the Kṣatrapa ruler. He has used the Śaka era or the era of c. 78 CE in his Andhau record dated in year 11. This means he was Kṣatrapa of the Nasik region particularly in c. 89 CE which falls in the time of Kaniska-I. Although he has not mentioned the name of his overlord in the inscription, yet it does not mean that he was not under the imperial Kuṣāṇas. The reason why he did not mention the name of his overlord may be because the inscription was a private record and he was not bound to mention the name of the supreme authority. It was quite enough for him to mention the master of the land with whom the administration of the area was immediately concerned and to the reckoning used by the administration. The era was also used by his grandson, Rudradāman I too in his famous Junagarh inscription, where he calls himself Mahāksatrapa.

Thus Kaniska’s victories proclaimed in far-flung localities in the northern, eastern, central and Deccanese zones of India in the Rabatak inscription of the very first year of his era could not have been gained in less than a year. All the areas or at least most of them might have been annexed by him during the reign of his father as a co-ruler, a junior king or a “second” or an assistant king. He, after becoming an independent king certainly expanded his empire as the references discussed till now suggest. Kaniska-I definitely was great empire builder as he not only kept intact the empire of the Kuṣāṇas conquered during his predecessors i.e., Kujula and Vima Kadphises, but also extended the limits of the empire in cardinal directions.
Successors of Kaniska-I

Vasiśka

Vasiśka, appears to be the successor of Kaniska-I. He ruled for a few years as we have found his inscriptions in different regions from year 24 to year 28. The Isāpur epigraph of the year 24 calls him Vāsiśka.316 This may be considered his first inscription as independent king. The inscription is on a yūpa or a sacrificial post. Another inscription of the year 28 was found at Sāñcī.317 It is engraved on a pedestal of a Bodhisattva image. The three line inscription refers to the creation of a shrine and the establishment of an image of Buddha in Dharmadeva monastery by Madhurikā, the daughter of Vera in the year 28 during the reign of Mahārājārajarājirāja devaputra Śahi Vasāśka (Vasiśka).

Both of the inscriptions refer to him as mahārāja, rājātirāja devaputra śahi which means he was an independent king. The Kamra inscription of Vajheska (Vasiśka) of the year 20318 also suggests that he should be successor of Kaniska-I as he was a co-ruler of Kaniska I. During the letter’s reign, we have his another inscription of the year 22 from Sāñcī (Sanchi) which has already been discussed earlier. It was issued by Vasiśka as a co-ruler of Kaniska-I. He was probably the same as Vajheska, the father of Kaniska-II of the Ārā inscription of year 41.319

The Rājatarangini of Kalhana mentioned three Kuśāna kings as mentioned earlier namely Huśka, Juśka and Kaniśka. Juśka is identified by the scholars with Vasiśka. The Rājatarangini informs as that he (Juśka) founded a city named Juśkapur, identified with Zakar or Zukur,320 to the north of Srinagar. He is also said to be the founder of Jayasvāmpur.321 We are still unable to find out his coins. He issued coins or not is still not known.

Huviśka

Huviśka appears to be the immediate successor of Vasiśka as the Mathurā inscription of the year 28322 suggests that during the rule devaputra śahi Huviśka, several endowments are made by Prācīnika, son of Sarukamāna, lord of Kharā,
Salera and Vakana, in the month of Gurppiya (Indian-Prosthapada, English August).

The inscription in a few months later of the Sāncī inscription of Vasiska discussed earlier which was issued in the Hemanta (winter) month of the year 28. He ruled up to 60 as suggested by the Mathurā Jain image inscription of year 60.323

Most of the inscriptions of Huviška have been found in the regions surrounding Mathurā which deficiently shows his influence over the region. The Wardak epigraph324 in eastern Afghanistan region referring to some meritorious act, indicates the inclusion of this region in his empire.

If Huşka of the Rājatarangini is the same Huviška whom we are talking about, then he might have Kāśmīra or a part of it under him. He is said to have built the town of Huškapur, identified with Uşkur.325

The prevalence of the silver coins of Huviška in the lower Indus country326 indicates his rule there in that country. But the Andhau inscription of the year 52 speaks of the rule of Caṇṭana and Rudradāman-I327 in a part of Deccan. Both of them have used the title Rājana as the inscription contains the lines:-

rajaṇa Caṇṭanasā Ysāmotika-putrasa rājaṇa Rudradāmansa Jayadāma putrasa varṣe dvipacase

On his coins Caṇṭana used the legend “rājñō mahākṣatrapasa (Ysāmotikaputrasa) Caṇṭana.”328

Ptolemy329 also describes the places like Barygaza, Nasik and Ozene in the territory of Tiastenes or Caṇṭana. With this information we cannot say with certainty that these regions had slipped away from the Kuṣāṇas as Caṇṭana was still Mahākṣatrapa which means he is under a supreme power of a sovereign who should be Huviška.
Thus Huviṣka was having sovereignty over a big empire extending from at least Mathurā in the east to Afghanistan (Wardak; west of Kabul) in the west to the lower Indus region in the south west or Deccan.

The *Hou Han-shu* contains a reference to his relation with Central Asia. It states, “During the rule of emperor Ngan, in the period of Yuan-tcou (114-116), Nagan Kouo, king of Su-le, had, exiled his maternal uncle T’can P’an and sent him as a hostage to the king of the Yüeh-Chih. The Yüeh-Chih King was in good terms with him. Ngan Kouo died without having a son. His mother ran the administration of the kingdom. With the people of the country, she placed Yi-fou, the son of a younger brother of T’cen- P’an on the throne as the King of Su-le. T’cen-P’an claimed his sight to the throne. He requested the king of the Yüeh-Chih to help who in turn sent soldiers to escort and carry him back to Su-le. The people of that country had respect and affection for T’cen-P’an, besides they feared Yuch-Chih. They, therefore arranged to despoil Yi-fou of his seal and seal-cord (ribbon) and to go before T’cen-P’an whom they made their king.

Thus the information makes it clear that the Yüeh-Chih king was still having great influence in the Su-le region in c. 114-116 CE. The period should fall in the reign of Huviṣka if Kaniṣka started his era in c. 78 CE.

**Kaniṣka II**

The interesting thing in the period of Huviṣka is the Ārā inscription of year 41. It speaks of Kaniṣka, the son of Vajheṣka. This cannot be the same Kaniṣka-I whom we have discussed earlier as was supported by R. D. Banerji and V. A. Smith because he ruled till year 23 and moreover he was not the son of Vajheṣka as the inscription mentions. The epigraph bears the year 41 and describes Vajheṣka’s son Kaniṣka as ‘Mahārāja rājātirāja devaputra kaisara’. Vajheṣka has been identified with Vasiṣka who was succeeded by Huviṣka who ruled from year 28-60. From the title of the king mentioned in the Ārā inscription, it appears that he is a sovereign or independent ruler. Lüders, however thinks
that since Vajheśka, the father of Kaniṣka in question should be identified with Vasiṣṭha, who started ruling after Kaniṣṭha-I. Vajheśka’s sons Kaniṣṭha should be Kaniṣṭha-II. The scholar opines that after Vasiṣṭha, the empire was divided between Kaniṣṭha-II and Huviṣṭha. Kaniṣṭha-II was ruler of the northern part and Huviṣṭha of India. He further thinks that the latter captured northern part sometimes before the year 51 of the Wardak epigraph, the provenance of which indicated his authority over the region. Konow too identifies him with Kaniṣṭha-II. He suggests that Huviṣṭha was merely a viceroy in eastern provinces before the year 40 as he is not described as an emperor in any record before that. Later he became the emperor of the whole Kuṣāṇa empire, as the Wardak inscription of the year 51 ascribes the full imperial titles to him.

The theories however, lack a sound base. There is no strong evidence of the division of the Kuṣāṇa empire in two different parts. If we accept that there was division of the empire then we should have got more inscriptions and numismatic evidences of Kaniṣṭha-II as we get of Huviṣṭha. As far as the imperial title is concerned we have an example of Kaniṣṭha-I who is referred to as *mahārāja* in the inscription of the year 3. Another epigraph of the year 7 refers to him as *mahārāja rajasūri rāja devaputra sāhiḥ* and a third of the year 9 ascribes only the first title to him while of the year 11 gives him more than the first three titles. The only explanation we may give is that both Huviṣṭha and Kaniṣṭha-II appear joint rulers or co-rulers. Kaniṣṭha-II appears to have died before Huviṣṭha, for no other record of his reign has so far been discovered.

**Vāsudeva I**

Vāsudeva I was the next Kuṣāṇa emperor. The earliest date we may assign to him on the basis of epigraphic record is year 64 or 67. It is an inscription on the base of a stone image of Buddha, found at Pālikherā near Mathurā. The last dated record of the ruler found so far belongs to the year 98. This was found on the base of a squatted Jina image in the vicinity of Mathurā. The dates are in
Kaniṣka era of c. 78 CE. Since the last date of his predecessor, Huviṣka is 60, so it is possible that he might have started his rule in c. 138 CE.

Most of the inscriptions of Vāsudeva-I are found surrounding the regions of Mathura, which made the scholars to believe that his rule did not extend much beyond a part of modern Uttar Pradesh. The absence of his Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions further strengthen their belief. Although we have got a few inscription in Kharoṣṭhī belonging to this period, yet the name of the ruler is no where mentioned. Hence we can not say with certainty that these belonged to Vāsudeva I or not.

The north-western regions should be under the Kuśāṇas until they were caputred by the Sassanians as referred to in the Naqš-š-Rustam inscription as discussed earlier in or after c. 241-42 CE. Thus Vāsudeva-I should be the sovereign of this region also. The presence of the Kuśāṇa power in Kāśmīra during the time of Vāsudeva-I can be estimated from a reference in the works of Hsüan-Tsang that, “after Kaniṣka’s death the Kṛtiya race once again assumed the government, banished the priests overthrew the religion”. Kaniṣka mentioned here may not be Kaniṣka I or Kaniṣka II of the Ārā inscription because the Rājatarangini clearly refers to three Kuśāṇa rulers as stated earlier. Both of them definitely were before Huviṣka who ruled upto year 60 or c. 138 CE. He was succeeded by Vāsudeva-I. Kaniṣka mentioned by Hsüan-Tsang hence should be some other ruler of the Kuśāṇas. Hence Kāśmīra region should also be under Vāsudeva-I.

As far as the lower Indus region in concerned, the Junagarh rock inscription of the year 72 of Rudradāman-I speaks about this sovereignty over Sindhust-šauvira regions which are located in the lower Indus country. Several other regions mentioned in the inscription can be located in Kutch, Kathiawad, western Deccan, eastern and western Malwa and Rajasthan. Rudradāman-I claims his success over Sātakarni, who should be a ruler of the Sātavāhana dynasty and over the Yandheyas. There is no reference of the struggle with the Kuśāṇas. The question arises that from whom he was winning the Sindhust-šauvira regions which were earlier under the Kuśāṇas? Moreover, as stated earlier, the
Yandheyas were the people in Punjab and Haryana region which means the Kuṣāṇas had lost control over these regions. The inscription is dated in Śaka or Kaniska era of c. 78 CE which means it was issued in c. 149-150 CE, definitely during the reign of Vāsudeva-I.

The family of Caṣṭana seems to have established the independent rule in the lower Indus region at least during the time of Rudradāman-I. B. N. Mukherjee\textsuperscript{341} rightly remarks that if the family of Kṣatrapa Caṣṭana used to swear at least nominal allegiance to Vāsudeva-I for at least a certain period, we should believe that they were given the status of hereditary feudatories”. Hence we may say that the Kuṣāṇa empire suffered a loss of the territories during the days of Vāsudeva-I but still he was having sovereignty over a large area extending from Trans Oxiana to Mathurā.

**Kaniṣṭha III**

The next King in the Kuṣāṇa genealogy is Kaniṣṭha, who is referred to as Kaneško Kośāno on some gold coins. These coins show a figure of the king at altar on the obverse and Ardokṣo or Śiva with bull on the reverse.\textsuperscript{342} Another variety of the coins of the king on its reverse is the figure of goddess Nana on Lion.\textsuperscript{343} The Coins bear Brāhmī letters in addition to Greek ones. Such features on the coins are noticed for the first time on the coins of Vāsudeva-I. Hence the ruler Kaneško, i.e. Kaniṣṭha, the Kuṣāṇa of the coins should be a ruler after Vāsudeva-I or his contemporary.\textsuperscript{344} We do not know the relationship between the two. It is clear that he is neither Kaniṣṭha I nor Kaniṣṭha II, Hence he may be called Kaniṣṭha III.

The coins of Kaniṣṭha III with Ardokṣo or Śiva on reverse are found in Punjab region and those with Śiva on the reverse are found further west.\textsuperscript{345} The coin type displaying Nanā on Lion was found from Begram.\textsuperscript{346} The prevalence of the coins indicates that Kaniṣṭha III was ruling in the regions of Transoxiana, south-eastern, northern and north-eastern Afghanistan and in the Peshawar region as may be said on the basis of provenance of his coins.
Vāsudeva-II

The existence of another Vāsudeva is also known from numismatic evidences. His coins are different from those of Vāsudeva-I as they show greater deterioration in monetary standard such as technique, fabric and consistency of gold content etc. Hence he may be called Vāsudeva II. A number of gold coins bearing a figure of a king holding a trident and sacrificing at an altar in front of another trident on the obverse with a symbol and the legend São nāno såo Bobzodeo Košāno in the Greek script and the Bactrain language have been found. The reverse of these coins bear Śiva with bull and trident, the legend Oeṣo and a four-pronged symbol. The main difference between these coins and those of Vāsudeva I’s coinage without Brāhmī letters is the appearance of the nandipada symbol on the coin of Vāsudeva II.

The gold coins of the Hormizd-I Kuṣāṇaśah and Varahran I Kuṣāṇaśah resemble these coins and suggest that these coins evolved out of the coins of Vāsudeva-II. These coins have been found from the areas of Badakshan to the north of the Hindukush, and in a somewhat limited number from the localities of Charikar and Kabul to the south of the mountain.

Thus these regions should be in the Kuṣāṇa domain till their take over by the Sassanians as indicated by the Naqsh-I- Rustam inscription of Ṣāpūr I.

Vāsudeva II appears to be the emperor of the Kuṣāṇa when the dynasty was on the verge of collapse. He may be identified with the Yüeh-Chih king Po-t’iao who sent ambassador to the Wei court in c. 230 CE. He was most probably the king when the Sassanians were growing in power and establishing their supremacy over Persia and surrounding regions. The imperial Kuṣāṇa submitted to the Sassanian king Ardašīr I, sometimes before c. 242 CE when Ṣāpūr I, son of Ardašīr I ascended the throne. Most probably Vāsudeva II was the Kuṣāṇa emperor who submitted to the Sassanians.

The Naqsh-I-Rustam inscription declares that the whole of the Kuṣāṇa country (Kwshnhshtr or Kouseneon ethnos) the whole area lying between Mrgw (Merv) Hryw (Herat), Skstn (Seistan), Twgrn, Mkwrn and P’ytn (Baluchistan region) Hndstn or India, Pshkbwl or Pakibouron (Peshawar) and the frontiers of...
K’ash (Kashgar), Swgd (Sogdiana), and Sh’sh (‘stn) (Tashkent) etc. was under his control.354

The inscription clearly documents a Sassanian penetration into the Kuṣāṇśahr. The Kuṣāṇas were thus down but not out as we find their existence even during the time of great Gupta emperor Samudragupta. They are mentioned in his Allahabad Pillar inscription as daivaputra ṣāhī ṣāhānuṣāhī, a title used by them quite frequently is their inscriptions. The Kuṣāṇas in the fourth century or the early part of the fifty century seem to have acquired a new designation Kidāra, whom the scholars call the Kidāra Kuṣāṇas.355 By the middle of fourth century CE the Kidāra Kuṣāṇas had established their rule over the Kabul valley and continued to rule, while acknowledging the supremacy of the Sassaninas till the Huṇa invasion.356
Notes and References

2. Arthaśāstra, I. 2. 1
4. Arthaśāstra, I. 2. 10.
5. Ibid, I. 3. 1
6. Nītiśāra, 2, 12
7. Arthaśāstra, I. 4.1
8. Nītiśāra, 2, 14
9. Manusmṛti, IX, 326-333
10. Rāmāyana, Ayodhya Kānda, 100, 47
11. Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, 68, 47
12. Arthaśāstra, I. 5. 8
13. Manusmṛti, VII, 43
14. Mahābhārata, Āranyaka Parva, 150, 30-31, Śānti Parva, 59, 33; Rāmāyana, Ayodhya Kānda, 100, 68; Agni Parāṇa, 225, 21-22; 237, 5; 238, 8, 9; Viṣṇu Purāṇa, I, 9, 119; Bhāgavata Purāṇa, III, 12, 44; VII, 11. 15; X 24, 21; Matṛya Purāṇa, 145, 36; Harivamśa, 40, 39; Brahma Purāṇa, 20. 85; 44. 27-40.
15. Arthaśāstra, I. 4. 3
16. Nītiśāra, 2, 15
17. Arthaśāstra, I. 1. 1
28. Rājatarangīni, I, 1.170
30. IA, 1908, vol. 37, P. 41
32. JRAS, 1912, p. 670
34. Ibid
35. Ibid
38. Ibid, p. Li
39. Ibid
40. Ibid
41. Ibid
42. Ibid
43. Ibid
44. Ibid
45. Ibid
46. Ibid
47. Ibid, p. Lii; JRAS, 1907, p. 1046
50. JRAS, 1873, p. 92; Rosenfield, J. M. (1967), p. 8
52. Konow, S., Ibid, p. XXII
53. Ibid, p. Liii
54. IHC, 1943, p. 35
55. JRAS, 1966, p. 19
56. Ibid
58. Ibid, p. 5
59. IA, 1905, vol. 34, p. 75-76; 1908, vol. 37, p. 25-26
61. JRAS, 1966, p. 19
65. Watson, B., Ibid, p. 167
66. Ibid, p. 167-168
68. IA 1905, vol. 34, p. 25-26, 75-76
70. Mukherjee, B. N., ibid.
72. Tarn, W. W. ibid, p. 277; Mukherjee, B. N., ibid; IA, 1903, vol. 32, p. 418-419; JAOS, 1917, vol. 37, p. 97
73. Watson, B. (1962), vol. II, p. 267-269; JAOS, ibid, p. 96-97
75. Ibid, p. 9
79. Mukherjee, B. N., ibid, p. 111-113; IA, ibid, p. 417.
80. JAOS, 1917, vol. 37, P. 94

61
    Tarn has referred to Strabo while discussing the nomadic conquest of Bactria where he discusses in detail the occupation of Bactria by the nomadic tribes among whom Yueh-Chih was one. These tribes got Bactria from the Greeks; Mukherjee, B. N. (1988), p. 12-13

82. Tarn, W. W., *ibid*, p. 284


102. *Ibid*

103. *Ibid*
109. *IA*, 1903, p. 418
112. *JRAS*, 1912, p. 683

Marshall States that parenthetically it may be observed that according to Philostratus, the King ruling in Taxila at the time of Apollonius visit bore the name of Phraotes, not Gondophares and thus has been cited as one of the proofs of the author's untrustworthiness. Herzfeld, however, has ingeniously suggested that 'Phraotes was a Graecised Corruption of the word *apratiıkata* = 'invivable', which was one of the Gondophares titles and one which was used exclusively by him among all the foreign rulers of the north-west. He further suggests that coins of Parthian emperor Gondophares have been found in great abundance at Bagram and other sites in Kabul Valley, but none of his successors Pacore. From this we may infer that Parthian rule in Paropanisadae came to an end after the death of of Gondophares, whose last recorded date is c. 45 CE.

118. Ibid, p. 9-10
126. Ibid, p. 217
128. ASI-AR, 1912-13, p. 42-45
135. EI, vol. XXI, p. 251-59
136. EI, vol. XIV, p. 285-95
141. ASIR, 1879, vol. 12, p. 43; Chattopadhyay, B., ibid, p. 236
142. Chattopadhyay, B., ibid, p. 235.
146. Ibid
149. Rawlinson, G. (1893), p. 268
150. BSOAS, (1953), vol. XV,pt. 1, p. 90
153. Ibid.
161. Rapson, E. J. (1897), p. 18
162. ASI-AR, 1912-13, p. 8
164. IMB, 1995, p. 27
168. IA, 1903, p. 349, 385
169. JRAS, 1914, p. 79ff
170. JRAS, 1903, p. 334
172. Ibid, p. L xxv
173. IA, 1903, p. 385
174. Ibid.
175. JASB, 1886, vol. IV, p. 193
176. IA, 1903, p. 385
178. JPASB, 1910, p. 479
179. IA, 1903, p. 356
180. Ibid, p. 349
181. IA, 1929, vol. 58, p. 147; EI, Vol. XIV, p. 142
185. *Ibid*
188. *IMB*, 1995, p. 6,7
195. *Ibid*, p. 41
198. *Ibid*

N. Sims Williams as according to B.N. Mukherjee reads the name Vima Taktu who is referred to as grandfather of Kaniška I, but B.N. Mukherjee reads it as Saddkana.
204. *JRAS*, 1913, p. 914
206. JRAS, 1912, p. 665-688, 981-1019
208. JRAS, 1913, p. 945
213. Rapson, E. J. (1897), p. 18
214. JRAS, 1914, p. 983
225. JRAS, 1914, p. 973-986
227. Ibid, p. 257
229. Ibid, p. 120
230. Ibid, p. 148
231. Ibid, p. 236
232. Ibid, p. 31
233. Ibid, p. 273
235. Sastri, K.A.N., Ibid.
239. EI, vol. VIII, p. 44
244. Ibid.
245. EI, vol. XXIV, p. 253

Bandhogarh inscription of Bhimasena of the year 51 is the earliest Magha epigraph found till now. Hence they were using the era of another ruler, rather of their own.

247. JRAS, 1913, p. 645
248. IA, 1881, vol. p. 214; JRAS, 1903, p. 3.
249. JAOS, 1941, vol. 61, p. 242
250. JRAS, 1913, p. 912; Rapson, E. J. (1897), p. 183; Rapson, E. J. (1955), p. 58
253. Basham, A. L. Ibid, p. 84
254. Ibid, p. 199
255. JRAS, 1913, p. 952
258. JASB, 1908, vol. 4, no. 3, p. 81-83
263. IA, 1923, vol. 52, p. 82-84; Raychaudhuri, H. C. (1996), p. 415
265. Ibid, p. 162, pl. XXXII
266. Ibid, pl. LXXXVII
267. Ibid
270. Ibid, p. 69
274. IMB, 1995, p. 6,7
275. Ibid, p. 10
278. EI, vol. VIII, p. 179 ff.
281. IMB, 1995, p. 31
283. Sharma, G. R., Ibid, p. 49-50
284. EI, vol. VIII, p. 176-179
285. *IA*, 1903, p. 382, 387
286. *Ibid*, p. 383
290. *Ibid*, p. 129-130
294. *EI*, vol. VIII, p. 44, 60
295. *Ibid*, p. 60
296. *Ibid*
301. *Ibid*
302. *Ibid*, p. 149
305. *IA*, 1903, p. 388
308. *JRAS*, 1942, p. 19
311. *Ibid*.
312. *IA*, 1903, p. 421-22

70
Banerji identified Kaniska of the Ara inscription with Kaniska-I and thought that in the later part of his rule while Kaniska-I was engaged in war in the frontier, Huviška was left incharge of Indian affairs with full imperial title.

Smith suggested that Vasiška and Huviška were sons of Kaniška-I who ruled in succession as viceroys of upper Indian while their father was warring beyond the mountains.

336. *EI*, vol. XXX, p. 181-184

337. *EI*, vol. II, p. 205


339. *IMB*, 1987, vol. XXII, p. 18-23; Year 68, p. 20; Year 70, p. 21; Year 76, p. 21; Year 80, p. 21-22; Year 80, p. 22; Year 81, p. 22; Year 82, p. 22; Year 83, p. 23; Year 89, p. 18; Year 91, p. 23; Konow, S. (1961), p. 171-172, Year 89


342. Mukherjee, B. N. (1967), p. 84


344. Chattopadhyay, B. (1967), p. 100


347. Mukherjee, B. N. (1967), p. 84

348. *Ibid*, p. 85


350. Gardner, P. (1971), pl. XXIV, nos. 8-10


353. *BSOAS*, (1937), vol. IX, pt. 4, p. 848

