CHAPTER VIII

1) DISINTEGRATION

We see that all the inscriptions of Vāsudeva I were discovered in Mathura. But his coins, especially copper coins were discovered in the north-western parts of his empire. From these discoveries we can infer that these regions had been under Vāsudeva. A big deposit of 531 coins

1. See supra pp. 379 ff.
in a jar was discovered from Dhammarajika stūpa site in Taxila. Only one of these belongs to Kaniska.

Kabul Museum Stone inscription of the year 83 i.e. A.D. 161, issued during the reign of Tiṇavharna, the Kshatrapa of Purushapura, makes no reference to any Kuśāna king of that period. Rudradaman in his Gilmar inscription of the year 72 has claimed that he himself attained the title of Mahakshātrapä. He has not mentioned the name of any Kuśāna ruler.

An ordinary title Rājā has been given to Vasudeva in his last inscription namely Mathura Jain image inscription of the year 98. While he was given the titles Mahārāja Rājārāja Devaputra in the Mathura Jain inscription of the year 74; Mahārāja in the Mathura inscription of the years 80 and 83; Mahārāja Rājārāja Devaputra Sahi.

1. ASIAR 1935-36 pp. 33
2. AO Vol XVI for 1938 pp 238, 240
3. LFB p. 96
4. IA for 1904 p. 108
5. IA Vol XXIII pp 106-07
6. EI Vol I p. 392
7. IA Vol XXXIII p. 107
in the Mathura jain inscription of the year 84 and Mahārāja Rājātarāja Sahā in the Mathura jain inscription of the year 87. Therefore the title Bālan of Mathura jain image inscription of the year 98 point to the decline of the Rāṣṭrapāla power in his period.

The Yaudheya, Nāga and Magha kings began to raise their heads. Coins of Nāga kings were discovered in the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Mathura and Padam Pawaya. Vīrasena, one of these Nāga kings, has been recorded as Swāmi in the Jankhat inscription of 13th year of his reign. The letters of this inscription resemble those which are found in the inscriptions of Vāsudeva. Vīrasena was, therefore, contemporary of Vāsudeva.

1. JPA SB Vol V p.276 I No.8
2. IA Vol XXIII pp 108
3. ibid p.108 No.XXIII
4. MJ p.19; IMC p.191
5. This is ancient Padmāvati
6. JRAS for 1900 p.553
7. MJ pp 21-22
From the coins we come to know the two names Nava Nāga and Bhava Nāga. Bhava Nāga may be identified with the Bhārāsīva king of that name mentioned in the Seoni Copper plate grant of Vakataka king Pravarasena 1. His coins have been found in Padmavati. In Vāru Purāṇa and Vīṣṇu Purāṇa we find a mention of Nāga kings.

The Magha kings asserted their independence in the territories of Bandhogara and Kausāchala. The Bandhogara inscriptions of the years 86, 87 and 88 of Mahārāja Kautsi-putra Pothaśrī, the legends Praśṭhaśrīva found at Pāista, indicate that he was an independent ruler during the period of Vasudeva I. Bhadrā-magha, the son of Pothaśrī

1. III p. 23
2. LRB pp. 73-75
3. JN & I Vol V pp 21-27
4. 96.37
5. IV. XXIV. LXIII
6. Bandhogara is situated in Rewa district in Madhya Pradesh
7. NIIP Vol VI p. 43

8. D.R. Sahni suggests these dates belonging to Gupta era (E. I Vol XVIII p. 160) while Kamisha Deva (EI Vol. XIV p. 256) dates them in the Chedi era. If we accept any of these then the dates will fall within Gupta period. But Gupta never allowed their viceroys to assume royal title and to issue coinage in their own name.

9. CJS p. 260
began to rule at Kausambi and Bandhogarh. He bore the title 1 2 
Mahārāja in the Kosam inscriptions of the years 81, 87 and 88 and the Bandhogarh inscription of the year 90. His successor Sivamagha bore the legend Mahārāja Cuntamiputra. 5 His coins were found in the Fatehpur hoard.

6 Siva-maghasya.

7 The Yaudheya kings were ruling in the south-eastern Punjab during the Kuśāṇa period. Seals and coins discovered in Sunet near Ludhiana point to a great victory of the Yaudheyas. And these coins were issued to commemorate that victory. According to Altekar this victory was over the Kuśāṇas.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

1. EI Vol XXIII p.253
2. ibid p.245
3. ibid Vol XVIII p.160
4. NIIP Vol VI p.43
5. EI Vol XVIII p.159 No.II
6. JNSI Vol II pp 95-108
7. JNES pp 255-56
8. JASB for 1884 pp 134 ff.
The Malavas can be identified with Malli who at the time of Alexander's invasion were occupying the territory below the confluence of the Jhelum and the Chenab extending towards the Ravi. They migrated to the southwards from the Punjab. In the end of the second century A.D. they seemed to have won a great victory over the Kuśāṇas.

Rise of all these independent powers over parts of the erstwhile Kuśāṇa territories indicates considerable disintegration of Vasudeva I's empire.

2. **LATER KUŚĀNAS**

The last dated inscription of Vasudeva I is of the year 98, i.e. A.D. 176-77, possibly his last reigning year. Not a single dated inscription assignable to the Kuśāṇas after this date has come down to us. There are a few Kuśāṇa coins which for the first time bear Brahmā legends. The rest of the Kuśāṇa coins except one unique case it may be stated, bear legends in Greek and / or Kharoṣṭhī. This introduction of Brahmā represents the later stage of influence of Indian culture over the Kuśāṇas. These coins are, therefore, assigned to rulers who succeeded Vasudeva I, who did not issue any coins with Brahmā legends.

1. Gras p.257
2. EI Vol II p.205
3. supra p. 367
Some of these coins bearing the obverse like those of Vasudeva I, but the legend Shaonano shao kanesko are attributed to as successor of Vasudeva, and the third Kusana ruler bearing this name. Some stray Brahmi letters bear Siva and Bull as in the coins occur in the field. Reverse of these coins of Vasudeva I. The exact period of Kaniska III is not known. According to some scholars this king ruled for 30 years (AD 180 to AD 210). His coins have been found from widely separated regions, namely, Punjab, Seistan, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Bactria. But we cannot accept rule of this otherwise obscure ruler over these extensive territories merely on the basis of find-spots of his coins. According to R.D. Banerji the stray Brahmi letters stand for the name of issuer, the name of mint city and province. It is known that these stand only for the Satraps or governors who issued them. But the exact explanation of these letters is still a mystery.

1. IMC pp 87-88 Nos. 1-8
2. Legend though worn out is still legible.
3. CuIS p. 248
4. JASB (NS) Vol. IV pp. 81-83
5. NHIP Vol. 6, p. 14
1. The coins of a king Vasudeva bearing Brahmā legends, have been discovered. The obverse of these coins resemble the obverse of those of Vasudeva I. The reverse bears Arodakṣo a, deity occasionally portrayed on Vasudeva I's coins. The name of the king is written, Vasu, vertically and the coins show Chinese influence. On another unique copper piece the obverse legend is Vasu while the reverse bears the Vasudeva I's symbol. The king who issued them considered to be a second Vasudeva.

2. We find a mention in the Chinese sources that in 230 A.D. an Indian king Po-tiao sent an embassy to China. The Po-tiao may be identified with Vasudeva II as Vasudeva I's reign ended in about 176 B.C. By 230 A.D. it is possible that this weak ruler sought Chinese help to stem tide of disintegration. Kusāna-Sassanian coinage issued by the kings of Bactria make it clear that he was overthrown by the Sassanians.

3. No Kusāna record, whether inscription or coin legend, after these coins is known. We can safely assume that the Kusāna rule disappeared between 230 and 240 A.D.

-----

1. IMC p.88 No. 9-10
2. CII Vol II Pt I p.IXXVII
3. TP,II, V,P.489
4. NHIP, p.18
Cunningham has divided the coins in two classes.

1. The coins in class A bear the legible legends Kaniska and Vasudeva. These seem to be older than those of Class B on which a few traces of Greek legends have survived.

They have almost the same obverse type depicting king standing at altar. Variations, wherever found, are minor.

3. Obv.

King nimbed, to left, wearing peaked helmet and complete suit of chain mail, making an offering with right hand over an altar. Long spear or trident in left hand. Greek legend in debased characters:

\[ \text{PAO NANO PAO KANiKCO KOPANO OR PAO NANO} \]

Reverse of the coins depicts one of the two deities Oeso and Ardokso. Rapson divides the coins on the basis of the deity represented thereon. According to him, those bearing the Oeso deity on reverse belong to the Kabul valley.

---

1. NC 3rd Serie Vol XII for 1892 p.115 pl VIII
2. ibid p.120 pl IX
3. IMC : Coins of the kings of N.W. India using names of Kaniska and Vasudeva in 3rd century A.D. Nos.1-10
4. Indian coins p.19
These were later imitated by Kuṣāṇa-Sassanians. The coins bearing Ardokṣa belong to Eastern regions of Kuṣāṇa empire. They were later imitated by Kiḍāra Kuṣāṇas and the Imperial Guptas.

**Reverse**

Oesho type: Greek legend ΟΕΟΟ. Two armed Śiva standing to front, noose in right hand and long trident in left. Behind him a bull standing to left.

On this type king on the obverse is represented holding spear or sceptre. The following Brahmi letters occur on the obverse of this type of Kaniska III's coins:

- **On the left** ठ, ह
- **In the middle** थो, था
- **On the right** ठू, ठी, ठि

On the obverse of Vasudeva II's coins of this type the following Brahmi letters occur:

- **On the left** रठु
- **In the middle** ठो
- **On the right** ठद ठि, हौ
II. **Ardoksho Type**: Greek legend ΑΡΔΟΧΟ. Female deity seated on throne, holding fillet and cornucopiae.

On this type king on the obverse is depicted as holding a trident. On the obverse of this type of Kandška III the following Brāhmī letters occur:

**On the left**: ह, न्य, स, इ, प, द

**In the middle**: ध, ढ, ग, घ, प

**On the right**: प, ति, विर, ब्र, ह, सि, महि, घ

**Obv.**

1. (1) ऊ नानो ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ

2. (2) ऊ नानो ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ ऊ

**Rev.**

ΑΡΔΟΧΟ Ϋ or ΟΗΟ