

## Chapter 2: Historical Overview

Reconstruction of the local history of the Northern Areas of Pakistan and the regional history of the northwestern Indian subcontinent within the broader framework of the world system provides a temporal background for interpreting rock drawings and inscriptions. Definite changes in styles of drawing petroglyphs and different languages used for writing inscriptions are connected with various waves of artistic, linguistic and historical developments in India, Iran, China and Tibet. Social, political, and economic transitions in contiguous parts of South Asia and Central Asia such as Swat, Kashmir, and the Tarim Basin certainly affected the mountain borderlands of northern Pakistan. While a reconstruction of a comprehensive macrohistory for all of these spheres of influence in every period is not possible, a clarification of the larger historical context is quite relevant for understanding local and regional events. Conversely, a clearer picture of the history of the contact zone of northern Pakistan may help to answer questions about textual transmission, iconographic transitions, changes in religious beliefs and practices, linguistic developments, and economic relations between northwestern India, Central Asia, and China.

Methods for establishing a preliminary chronological outline of the history of the frontier between India, China, and Iran require synthesis of archaeological, epigraphic and literary sources. Due to the lack of systematic excavations in this part of Pakistan, archaeological evidence is limited to rock drawings, surface finds, and

visible structures. About thirty thousand rock carvings reflect early migrations, dynamic changes in artistic patterns, and overlaps of indigenous, Indian, Iranian, and other outside religious and cultural spheres. Close to five thousand inscriptions found together with rock drawings at numerous locations along the Upper Indus and other rivers of northern Pakistan are the earliest and most reliable written sources. Names, titles, dates, and other information in these brief epigraphic records are indispensable for piecing together a partial historical picture. Literary sources which have already been introduced (see 1.4) supplement the archaeological and epigraphic evidence, especially in later periods.

The border region of northern Pakistan has been a pivotal crossroads between South Asia and Central Asia through various historical periods. Since prehistoric times, various groups migrated through the mountain passes and river valleys of this area. The periods of the mid to late centuries BCE, when Saka nomads moving from the Eurasian steppes to more fertile plains of the Indian subcontinent passed through this region, and the first to third centuries CE, when the establishment of the Kuṣāṇa empire created connected networks which were conducive for the initial spread of Buddhism beyond South Asia deserve special emphasis. Local inhabitants and regional powers like the Hūṇas in the Punjab and Kashmir (fifth to sixth century) and Hephthalites in neighboring parts of Afghanistan (fourth to sixth century) facilitated or hindered overland travel across geographical barriers by controlling mountainous routes. Non-elite residents and local ruling families such as the dynasty of the Paṭola

Śāhis in the sixth to early eighth century encouraged transmission across regional boundaries through their support of Buddhist shrines and monastic institutions near Gilgit. The struggle for regional control between China, Tibet, and Kashmir in the eighth to tenth centuries demonstrates the strategic importance of the mountain valleys at the junction of trans-Asian routes. Between the eleventh and nineteenth centuries, various local dynasties competed for hegemony while both resisting and accommodating with outside powers such as the Mughal, British, and Russian empires, which struggled to maintain control of frontier regions. The status of the modern Northern Areas, which were part of the dominion of the Mahārāja of Jammu and Kashmir until 1947, continues to be disputed by Pakistan and India. Since routes through northern Pakistan provide access for the more populated areas of South Asia to the mineral resources of independent but unstable Central Asian republics and the oil reserves of Xinjiang in western China, this region is likely to remain critically important.

### 2.1. Prehistory and Protohistory of Northern Pakistan

The earliest rock drawings in the Upper Indus valley supply visual testimony about the lives of prehistoric inhabitants of the present Northern Areas of Pakistan. Although rock art is difficult to precisely date, generally the oldest petroglyphs are more darkly patinated with layers of desert varnish through a natural process of

weathering.<sup>1</sup> When younger drawings or inscriptions overlap older carvings, a relative chronology of iconographic patterns and paleographic trends can be established. Prehistoric drawings in which animals are depicted in a “sub-naturalistic” style differ from simple line drawings of animals which continue to be carved today.<sup>2</sup> The contrast is evident in a comparison between earlier line drawings of *caprini* (goat-like animals) with small heads and large bodies in nos. 111:1 and 119:3-5 and later stylized representations in nos. 117:5, 7 and 118:1,2 at Shatial (Fig. 2.1.1: Prehistoric petroglyphs of *caprini* at Shatial).<sup>3</sup> Stylistic similarities with rock drawings from Zaskar (the Himalayan borderland between northern India and southwestern Tibet), the Pamir region of Central Asia, Mongolia, and southern Siberia suggest that particular types of chase and hunting scenes might belong to the Bronze Age of the late third and second millennium BCE (Francfort, Klodzinski, and Mascle 1990). However, just as assigning prehistoric dates solely on the basis of patination is unreliable (Bemmann and König 1994: 5; Bandini-König 1999: 119-120), caution is also necessary in accepting very early chronologies based only on stylistic criteria.

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<sup>1</sup> For more details on the geological process of repatination of rock carvings and inscriptions which can take thousands of years, see the introduction to chapter 3.

<sup>2</sup> According to Jettmar and Thewalt, animal drawings from Europe or the Near East designated as “sub-naturalistic” would imply dating similar drawings from northern Pakistan in the Epipaleolithic Age (1985: 12). While evidence of Paleolithic cultures have been discovered in Kashmir, at Sanghao near Mardan in NWFP, in the Soan valley of the Salt Range, and in the Lower Indus valley (Agrawal 1982: 16-21), it is not possible to confirm Jettmar and Thewalt’s preliminary dating of this style of rock drawings in the Paleolithic period without archaeological evidence from northern Pakistan.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Fussman and König 1997: 22, §2.2, pl. 10, pl. Xb

Hunting scenes with illustrations of animals such as ibexes, markhors, and snow-leopards pursued by canines and human figures holding bows reflect abundant wildlife and the economic importance of hunting. For example, prehistoric hunting scenes on stone 95 at Hodar show dogs accompanied by hunters raising bows in their arms to shoot at markhors and capridi (possibly ibexes, but the exact species are indeterminate) with bodies formed by two triangular shapes in outline (Fig. 2.1.2: Prehistoric petroglyphs of animals in triangular outline at Hodar).<sup>4</sup> “Hunting Magic” (Jagdglück) seems to have been an important motivation: “Depicting a wild animal in the rock possibly had magical purposes, for instance to exort [*sic*] wild animals or to insure a successful hunt” (Bandini-König, Bemann, and Hauptmann 1997: 36). Ibexes and markhors are locally associated with purity, fertility, and protection because they inhabit the high altitude mountains where fairies and other divinities reside (König 1994: 145). Apparently, cattle-breeding was also important for the previous inhabitants of this area, since bovids appear in earlier layers of drawings. As flat grazing lands were converted to cultivated terraces, goat herding became more prevalent (Jettmar 1994: 164).

Drawings of masks or “mascoïds” are also among the earliest types of rock carvings in northern Pakistan (Fig. 2.1.3: Mascoïd from Thalpan-Ziyarat).<sup>5</sup> Similar patterns in which spheres are divided into quadrants by diagonal lines are found in drawings of the Okunev culture of southern Siberia, Mongolia, and Xinjiang

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Bandini-König 1999: 351-355, scene 95:C, pl. 109, pl. XIVa,b

beginning in the third millennium BCE, but exactly when and how this motif was adopted in this region is uncertain.<sup>6</sup> About thirty giant anthropomorphic figures found in at least ten locations along the Upper Indus appear to belong to prehistoric or early historic periods.<sup>7</sup> Such life-size figures may be interpreted as indigenous local deities connected with places where hunters took routes leading up into the mountains to search for wild animals. A wide variety of shamanistic figures with horn-like decorations on their heads are also often linked with hunting scenes and possibly hunting magic (Bandini-König 1999: 11-16). While a few of these drawings which display some affinities with Siberian and Mongolian shamanistic motifs may belong to prehistoric periods, others demonstrate continuities with contemporary beliefs and practices associated with shamanism and hunting.

The early inhabitants of the mountain valleys of northern Pakistan probably exchanged influences with nearby neolithic settlements in Kashmir and Swat. Sites such as Burzahom and Gufkhal in Kashmir and Loebanr, Ghalegay, and Kalako-deray in the Swat valley (additional sites have been discovered in Tibet and Sikkim) dating from approximately 3000 to 1700 BCE were roughly contemporary with more prominent but unrelated Lower Indus valley centers like Harappa and Mohenjo-daro

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Jettmar and Thewalt 1985: 12, photograph 3.

<sup>6</sup> Francfort, Klodzinski, and Mascle support Jettmar's hypothesis for an early date for mascoïd patterns: "L'ensemble des représentations de 'mascoïdes' peut être rattaché à l'univers de la culture d'Okunevo et des cultures apparentées de l'Âge du Bronze, de la fin du IIIe au IIe millénaire. Les gravures du haut Indus ont été également, à just titre, rattachées à ce groupe" (1990: 8).

<sup>7</sup> Bandini-König 1999: 29-31, no. 94:2; Bandini-König, Bemmman, and Hauptmann 1997: 36-37; Dani 1983: 22-24, nos. 32, 34; Dani 1989: 100-101, pl. 4; Jettmar 1997b: 65-66, Figure 4.1-3; Jettmar and Thewalt 1985: photographs 3, 44

(Allchin and Allchin 1982: 111-117).<sup>8</sup> Pit burials, holed sickles, and luxury items excavated at Kalako-deray and Burzahom seem to have been connected with a socio-economic transition to a sedentary agricultural system, which “probably promoted contacts or interactions which involved opposite sides of the great mountain ranges (Stacul 1994: 712). Since these neolithic sites in Kashmir and Swat apparently display “evidence of trade and other more profound contacts with the Chinese world” (Allchin and Allchin 1982: 116), it is not unlikely that prehistoric routes for long-distance trade and cultural exchange between these areas of the South Asian subcontinent and China passed through the mountain valleys of the Indus, Gilgit, and Hunza rivers. Movement across the Pamir mountains of Central Asia and through Karakorum, Hindu Kush and Himalayan passes and valleys to South Asia was certainly possible from the earliest periods (Jettmar 1994: 158-163). Thus, transmission of artistic, technological, religious, and cultural influences and the development of trade relations between Central Asia and South Asia via routes across the mountains of modern northern Pakistan were already prefigured in prehistoric and protohistoric times.

Archaeological discoveries from preliminary explorations in the Northern Areas of Pakistan confirm ties between Central Asia and adjacent regions of South

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<sup>8</sup> Stacul 1994: 712 notes that “Black-on-red painted pottery suggesting Harappan Post-urban style” has been found in Swat and that an Early Harappan style painted pot filled with carnelian and agate beads was found at Burzahom. Direct commercial contacts between the Lower Indus Valley civilization (as attested by the discovery of clay seals) and the trading post of Shortughai near lapis lazuli mines in Badakhshan (modern northeastern Afghanistan) provides a parallel example of long-distance trade along routes through the Hindu Kush (Francfort 1989; Jettmar 1994: 157-158).

Asia in the first millennium BCE. Megalithic stone circles used for collective burials show that customs involving cremation and inhumation which were related to Central Asian ritual burials in *kurgans* during the first millennium BCE continued to be practiced until relatively recent times in Punyal, between the Ishkoman valley and Gilgit.<sup>9</sup> Evidence of burial of ashes and bone fragments in decorated clay pots found in the Darel Valley at Manikyal Payin may be linked with pit burials of the so-called Gandhāra Grave Culture of the first millennium BCE.<sup>10</sup> Other significant finds from Manikyal Payin and Shumari villages in Darel valley include a hoard of heavily patinated bronze “trunnion” axes with rectangular shaft holes which are similar to axes found in Kurram valley of NWFP, at Chanhu Daro in the Lower Indus valley, and along the Makran coast in southern Baluchistan (Jettmar 1961; Mughal 1985). These axe specimens, which may be dated in the last quarter of the second millennium BCE or in the beginning of the first millennium BCE, might be linked with other technological innovations which began to appear in South Asia around this time, which some scholars have associated with hypothetical Indo-Aryan migrations to the subcontinent (Mughal 1985: 215). Axes are prominently depicted in much later

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<sup>9</sup> Biddulph illustrates a “Circular stone sepulchral mound at Chashi” (near Gupis at the junction of the Yasin and Gilgit rivers), and refers to similar stone circles in the Astore valley (1986[1880]: 58). According to Dani, “the big megalithic circle tomb appears to be monumental in origin and this must belong to a Chief” (1989: 104, pl. 5) and “the presence of the megaliths suggests a political system based on chiefdom and it is here that later in history monarchical tradition found deep roots” (ibid., 112). For burial practices, see Biddulph 1986 [1880]: 112-4 and Jettmar 1967b.

<sup>10</sup> According to Dani 1983: 60-62, nos. 5, 41 and 1989: 104-105. A survey of the Darel valley by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan found two large storage jars and fragments of carinated bowls similar to fragments found in “Maurya levels of the settlements further south” (Brief Report 1980: 206). These findings, however, do not seem to support affinities with Gandhāra Grave Culture sites in Swat. Also see Tusa 1985 for an account of these Italian explorations in the Darel Valley.



rock drawings of the post-Buddhist period (after the sixth or seventh century CE), and are still important in ritual ceremonies (Bandini-König 1999: 54-57; Jettmar 1980b: 200).

Artistic features preserved in rock drawings reflect the nomadic heritage of groups which migrated from Central Asia to northern Pakistan during the first millennium BCE. A relevant example is the drawing of a two-wheeled chariot at Thor North, on the northern bank of the Upper Indus (Fig. 2.1.4: Two-wheeled chariot from Thor North),<sup>11</sup> which may be compared with other rock carvings of chariots from Gōgdara I in Swat and Sajmaly-Taš in the mountains above the Ferghana Basin.<sup>12</sup> The use of this motif in places where wheeled vehicles were not feasible (as pointed out by Jettmar 1985b: 757) demonstrates that the Pamir, Hindu Kush, and Karakorum mountains did not impede the cultural transfer of status symbols. While the carvings of chariots from Gōgdara I and Sajmaly-Taš could belong to the first millennium BCE, dating the chariot from Thor North in the same period would be difficult. On the one hand, Jettmar (1980b: 203) observes that the drawing of the chariot at Thor North would be classified in the Bronze Age based on comparisons with Inner Asian materials used by Brentjes (1977: 92-93) to date the carving of the chariot at Gōgdara I. But, on the other hand, Jettmar also notices that “[t]he draught animals [pulling the chariot] are standing above each other (not symmetric like seen in

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<sup>11</sup> Source: Jettmar 1980b: 203, 214, Fig. 1

<sup>12</sup> See Brentjes 1977: 92-3; Jettmar 1982c: 298; 1985b: 755-758, fig. 6; and Jettmar and Thewalt 1985: 13.

a mirror) indicating a relatively late date” (1985b: 758, caption below fig. 6). Such “heraldic symbols” continued to be employed in the rock art of northern Pakistan in periods much later than their prototypes in the first millennium BCE.<sup>13</sup> These examples illustrate the complexities and uncertainties involved in applying stylistic criteria to establish relative chronologies for rock art in different geographical regions.

## 2.2. Early Iranian and Hellenistic Influences

Iranian cultural influences extended to the Upper Indus region, although the Persian Achaemenid empire probably did not directly control this peripheral borderland. Old Persian inscriptions and the Greek historian Herodotus refer to the provinces and peoples bordering the modern Northern Areas of Pakistan during the period of the Achaemenid empire (559-326 BCE). According to the Behistun inscription of Darius I (522-486 BCE), the province of Ga(n)dāra (*Gadāra*) was included within the Achaemenid empire, which had been enlarged during the reign of Cyrus (559-530 BCE).<sup>14</sup> Following a Persian naval expedition down the Kabul and

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<sup>13</sup> Dates for similar rock drawings from Ladakh, Zaskar, and Tibet proposed by Francfort, Klodzinski, and Mascle (1990: 8ff.) based on earlier Central Asian and Chinese parallels do not seem to take the late survivals of the same motifs in northern Pakistan into account.

<sup>14</sup> For accounts of the expansion of the Achaemenid empire eastwards, see Briant 1996: 41 ff.; Chattopadhyaya 1974 [1950]; Cook 1985: 220; Foucher 1942-7: 2.193; Jackson 1968 [1922]: 298-299; and Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 102. Kent 1953: 119 translates the passage of the Behistun inscription thus: “Saith Darius the King: These are the countries which came unto me; by the favor of Ahuramazda I was king of them: Persia, Elam, Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, (those) who are beside the sea, Sardis, Ionia, Media, Armenia, Cappadocia, Parthia, Drangiana, Aria, Chorasmia, Bactria, Sogdiana, Gandara, Scythia, Sattagydia, Arachosia, Maka: in all, XXIII provinces.” The province of *Gadāra* does not exactly conform to the area of Gandhāra in northwestern Pakistan and

Lower Indus rivers to the Indian Ocean between 520-515 BCE (Herodotus 4.44), later inscriptions of Darius and Xerxes at Persepolis, Naqš-i-Rustam, and Susa add “Hi(n)duš” (roughly corresponding to modern Sindh in southern Pakistan) to the list of eastern Achaemenid provinces (Kent 1953: 137-138). Well-maintained road networks connected Achaemenid centers in Iran with the eastern provinces in Bactria, Gandhāra, and Sindh.<sup>15</sup> In a list of tribute sent by different parts of the empire to the Persian court, Herodotus (3.91) indicates that Gandhārans (*gandárioi*), Sattagydiāns (*sattagúdai*),<sup>16</sup> Aparytai (‘*aparútai*’),<sup>17</sup> and Dadikai (*dadíkai*)<sup>18</sup> lived in the seventh district, which was apparently located in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent north of the Kabul River and east of the Beas River (Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 103). In the same list of peoples living on the frontiers of the Achaemenid

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eastern Afghanistan. Foucher (1942-7: 2.193) observes that Achaemenid *Gadāra* included the trans-Hindu Kush region since Babylonian and Elamite versions of this inscription instead refer to this area as *Para-Uparaššanna* meaning “other mountains” on the southern side of the Hindu Kush (Paropamisadae in Greek sources). Foucher also believes that *Gadāra* could have extended as far south as modern Multan and as far east as the Chenab-Ravi doab in Pakistani Punjab, but such an extension of the territory of *Gadāra* is not accepted by Karttunen (1989: 35), among others. Karttunen states that “it seems that we can with some certainty include only the Upper Indus region as belonging to the Achaemenian Gandāra” (1989: 36), but the geographical extent of the “Upper Indus region” which Karttunen refers to probably does not include the areas around Chilas which I designate as the “Upper Indus.”

<sup>15</sup> Herodotus 5.52-4 describes the stations on the Achaemenid “Royal Road” between Sardis and Susa. Also see Briant 1996: 669-98; Dandamayev 1994: 54, and Frye 1963: 127-128.

<sup>16</sup> Foucher (1942-7: 2.196) localizes the Sattagydiāns in the Hazārajāt plateau of central Afghanistan. According to Lamotte (1988 [1958]: 103), Sattagudai may have lived around Ghazna in modern eastern Afghanistan, but Karttunen (1989: 35) instead locates them between Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan in the Middle Indus region of modern Pakistan.

<sup>17</sup> Karttunen (1989: 44-45, n. 300) criticizes Lamotte’s (1988 [1958]: 103) tentative acceptance of the identification of the Aparytai with modern Pathān Afridis as anachronistic.

<sup>18</sup> Herodotus’ Dadikai are probably to be connected with Sanskrit references to Darada (see 1.4.5), an ethnonym which is also attested in a Kharoṣṭhī graffito from Alam Bridge and Brāhmī inscriptions from Chilas (see 3.2.2-3).

empire, Herodotus (3.94) claims that Indians living in the twentieth district sent 360 talents of powdered gold to the Achaemenid treasury, a greater amount of tribute than the revenue from all of the other subjects of the Persian empire, excavated by giant gold-digging ants (see 1.4)!

Rock drawings from various sites along the Upper Indus River in northern Pakistan reflect Iranian artistic influences. In a carving from the so-called altar rock at Thalpan (3.2.3), an animal with a single horn and a tasseled mane kneeling on one foreleg resembles the decorative style and posture of animals in Iranian art (Jettmar and Thewalt 1985: 13, photo 5). In other drawings on the same rock, warriors are posed and dressed in broad belts, fringed skirts, and headgear like Iranian soldiers (Jettmar and Thewalt 1985: photo 6; Bandini-König, Bemann, and Hauptmann 1997: 38, fig. 3).<sup>19</sup> The pattern of “animals in line” in rock drawings from the Upper Indus might “indicate that the artist was influenced by Iranian art, maybe during the Achaemenid period” (Jettmar 1991a: 7, pl. 5). A petroglyph of an ibex and a humped bull near Alam Bridge (3.2.2) also displays Achaemenid style, but these artistic motifs may have been conserved by later Iranian visitors around the beginning of the Common Era (Fussman 1978: 23, no. 6,1). Anachronistic preservation of Achaemenid styles and motifs may have functioned as “heraldic symbols” for expressing regional or ethnic identity.

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<sup>19</sup> According to Bandini-König, Bemann, and Hauptmann, “Traceable in the Indus valley since the sixth century B.C., Iranian influence is attributed to the eastern expansion of the Achaemenid empire. Contemporary with their engravings are those which show men in Persian dress, comparable to

Alexander's attempt to subdue the eastern provinces of the Achaemenid empire in northwestern India and Pakistan between 327-325 BCE introduced Hellenistic influences in regions adjacent to the Upper Indus. After crossing the Hindu Kush from the direction of Bactria and Sogdia in 327 BCE, Alexander led a large force of Macedonian, Greek, Persian, and other mercenaries to the Swat valley, where he conquered the fortresses of Bazira (Bir-kot Gwandai), Ora (Udegram), and Aornus after very difficult sieges.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps, as suggested by Foucher (1942-7: 2.207), the Swat region was difficult for Alexander to conquer because he did not recognize that the Achaemenids maintained the neutrality of their frontier borderlands through tribute relationships rather than direct control. After advancing as far north as Swat, Alexander crossed the Indus River (probably near modern Hund), proceeded through the Punjab to the Beas River (where his army refused to go further into India), and retreated southwards down the Lower Indus River and across the desert of Gedrosia (modern Baluchistan in western Pakistan and eastern Iran). After he died in Babylon in 323 BCE, Greek colonists continued to live in military garrisons established in Bactria and northwestern Pakistan. While popular accounts of descent from Alexander associated with the ruling family of Hunza (Dani 1989: 116)

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figures on the gold plaques of the Oxus Treasure. The tasseled skirt fastened with a belt and the *anaxurudes*, the leg coverings, are typical attributes of this costume" (1997: 38).

<sup>20</sup> Bazira and Ora were convincingly identified with Bir-kot Gwandai and Udegram by Stein (1985 [1929]: 46 ff.), who also proposed that Aornus was located in the Pir-Sar range of mountains southeast of the Swāt Valley on the western bank of the Indus River. However, other authors, including Tucci (1977: 52-55), identify Aornus with Mt. Ilam, which unlike Pir-Sar is located close to Bir-kot and Udegram and is still as a holy place. Bernard 1999: 51 points out that classical authors refer to other locations named Aornus (etymologically meaning "the place without birds") in Bactria

and other peoples of northern Pakistan and northeastern Afghanistan (Tarn 1951: 302) may seem farfetched, the military expedition established contacts between the Hellenistic world and the northwestern Indian subcontinent.

Diplomatic, commercial, and religious exchanges between Greeks and Indians continued to take place for at least two centuries after the period of initial contact. Seleukos Nikator, one of the successors of Alexander, eventually ceded the northwestern Indian provinces as well as Gedrosia, Arachosia (modern Kandahar), and Paropamisadae (the area South of the Hindu Kush in modern Afghanistan around modern Kabul and Begram) to Candragupta Maurya in 305 BCE (Bernard 1994a: 90).<sup>21</sup> Diplomatic relations between the Mauryan empire and the Greek population in the northwest are attested in the accounts of Megasthenes, a Greek ambassador to the Mauryan capital at Pāṭaliputra (Karttunen 1997a: 69-93), and by bilingual translations of Aśokan rock edicts in Greek and Aramaic at Kandahar (Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 711-718). Hellenistic colonies, such as Ai Khanum at the confluence of the Oxus and Kokcha rivers (on the border between northern Afghanistan and Uzbekistan), continued to flourish in Bactria until the middle of the second century BCE (Bernard 1994a: 91 ff.). When Mauryan control of the northwest weakened after 200 BCE, Demetrius I and other Graeco-Bactrian kings began to expand their realms south of

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near Haibak, at Cumae in Campania, and in the Meander valley of Asia Minor. See Karttunen 1997a: 49, n. 168 for a brief summary of differing opinions on the location of Aornus.

<sup>21</sup> In exchange for difficult to control and unprofitable mountain and desert areas (with the exception of fertile areas of the Lower Indus, Punjab, Gandhāra, and Swat), Seleukos Nikator received 500 trained war elephants, which helped him to defeat Antigonos at the battle of Ipsus in 301 BCE. As a consequence of this treaty with the Mauryan empire, Greek colonists lived under Indian rule.

the Hindu Kush.<sup>22</sup> The names of over forty Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek rulers appear on coins found throughout Afghanistan, Pakistan, and northern and western India with legends in Greek and Kharoṣṭhī scripts (Bopearachchi 1991). Hellenistic and Indian motifs are combined on the coins of Indo-Greek rulers who maintained control of areas of the Punjab until the late first century BCE.

Numismatic, epigraphic, and literary evidence demonstrates that many Indo-Greeks adopted Indian religions, languages, iconography, and other features. Agathokles, an Indo-Greek ruler in eastern Afghanistan around 190-180 BCE, issued a special series of silver coins with images of the Indian deities Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva, his brother Balarāma-Saṃkarṣaṇa, and maybe his sister Subhadrā (Errington and Cribb 1992: 62).<sup>23</sup> Heliodōros, an ambassador of the Indo-Greek king Antialkidas from Taxila in the mid or late second century BCE to king Kāśīputra Bhāgabhadra (possibly the Śuṅga ruler Bhadraka), described himself as a devotee of Viṣṇu (*bhāgavata*) and recorded his establishment of a Garuḍa-pillar (*garuḍa-dhvaja*) in a Brāhmī inscription on a stone pillar at Vidiśā (see 4.3.2.2) in central India.<sup>24</sup> Menander, a powerful Indo-Greek king ruler of the Punjab and northwestern India around 150 BCE, patronized Buddhism according to the Pali text of the “Questions of Milinda” (*Milindapañha*) and Chinese versions of his dialogues with a Buddhist

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<sup>22</sup> Bernard 1994b: 101; Bopearachchi 1991: Table 5; Bopearachchi and Rahman 1995: 27-31.

<sup>23</sup> While these coin-types are not common and were probably not widely distributed, examples have been found at the Hellenistic outpost of Ai Khanum. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are also depicted in a rock drawing at Chilas II (see 3.2.3).

<sup>24</sup> Salomon 1998: 141, 265-267, fig. 12; Sircar 1965b: 88-89

scholar named Nāgasena (Fussman 1993b; Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 419-425).<sup>25</sup> Some Greek names and titles appear in Buddhist inscriptions from the northwest and Buddhist cave inscriptions from western India refer to several *Yavanas* (or *Yonas*), the designation for Greeks (Ionians) in Indian literature, but many of these *Yavanas* have Indian names, and the term often refers to any non-Indian (Karttunen 1997a: 294-298).

Greeks in India, like other groups of foreigners who preceded and followed them, were gradually absorbed into Indian society. As Narain observes, “they came, they saw, but India conquered” (1957: 11). After Indo-Greek rulers disappeared from the political scene, commerce between India and the Hellenistic and Roman worlds began to flourish in the first century CE along both overland and maritime trade networks (see 4.4). Hellenistic models had a long afterlife in the artistic traditions of Gandhāra, perhaps because of the presence of Greek artisans (as well as rulers) since the third century BCE. In the early centuries CE, Gandhāran Buddhist art continued to display a mixture of Greek, Iranian, and Indian iconographic elements which reflected the syncretic cultural environment of the northwest.

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<sup>25</sup> Menander is converted to Buddhism and relinquishes his throne to become an *upāsaka* in the expanded Pali version, but in the shorter Chinese version, probably translated between 317 - 420 CE, Menander remains a sympathetic patron of Buddhism (Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 423-425). The silver coins of Menander which show Athena in various martial poses present do not indicate that he converted to Buddhism, but his bronze coins depict an eclectic mixture of ambiguous symbols (Fussman 1993b: 87-88). Fussman remarks that with the exception of the Pali text, “aucun indice ne permet d’affirmer que le souverain grec eut pour le bouddhisme une préférence exclusive ou même ouvertement marquée” (1994b: 26).



### 2.3. Saka Migrations and Impact on Northern Pakistan

As Indo-Greek power diminished, Saka nomads from Central Asia migrated to the northwestern Indian subcontinent in the first and second centuries BCE.

Herodotus (4.1-142) describes the extent, customs, and origins of various groups of Scythians (as the Sakas are referred to in Western classical sources) who inhabited large areas of the steppes of Central Asia on the northern peripheries of the Greek world. The Sakas (as they are called in Iranian sources) are also known from Old Persian inscriptions and art of the Achaemenid empire. The Naqš-i-Rustam inscription of Darius I distinguishes three groups of Sakas:

- 1) *Saka Tigraxauda*: Sakas “wearing the pointed cap” (Kent 1953: 186) who are portrayed in a sculpture at Behistun and described by Herodotus (7.64) as “clad in trousers” and having “on their heads tall stiff caps rising to a point”; these Sakas lived in Central Asia between the Caspian Sea and the Jaxartes / Syr Daria River (Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 448; Rapson 1968 [1922]: 509);
- 2) *Saka Haumavarga*: “hauma-drinking” or “hauma-preparing” (Kent 1953: 211-212) Sakas identified with the Amyrgian Scythians of Greek sources, possibly located in the southeastern Iranian province of Drangiāna which later became known as Sakastān/ Śakasthāna/ Sejistān/ Seistān (Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 448; Rapson 1968 [1922]: 509);
- 3) *Saka Paradraya*: Sakas “who are across the sea” (Kent 1953: 138), probably north of the Black Sea (Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 448; Rapson 1968 [1922]: 509).

Chinese historical annals refer to the movements of the Sai (Chinese designation for Saka) southwards into northwestern India following a period of disturbances in Central Asia during the second century BCE. According to the *History of the Former Han (Han shu)*, covering the period from 206 BCE to 25 CE:

When, formerly, the Hsiung-nu [Xiongnu] conquered the Yüeh-chih [Yuezhi],<sup>26</sup> the latter moved west and established themselves as masters of Ta Hsia [Da xia]; it was in these circumstances that the king of the Sai moved south and established himself as master of Chi-pin [Jibin]. The Sai tribes split and separated and repeatedly formed several states. (Hulsewé 1979: 104-105)

The westward migrations of the Yuezhi to the Oxus valley directly led to the emigration of the Sai from the region between Kashgar and Issyk-Kul (in modern Kyrgyzstan) sometime before 128 BCE, when the Han ambassador Zhang Qian arrived in Sogdia and Bactria to make an alliance with the Yuezhi against the Xiongnu.<sup>27</sup> “King of the Sai” (*Sai-wang*) is probably a Chinese translation of Saka *murunḍa*, a title meaning “master,” “prince” or “lord” in the Zeda Kharoṣṭhī inscription of the time of Kaniṣka, Brāhmī inscriptions from Mathurā, and the Allāhabād pillar inscription of Samudragupta (Konow 1929: xx). Since according to the *Han shu*, “Sai tribes split and separated and repeatedly formed several states” it seems likely that their migration was not led by a single king, but was probably a gradual southward movement of acephalous groups to Jibin, a region apparently corresponding to Gandhāra or the northwest in general.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Pinyin equivalents in brackets correspond to the Wade-Giles transliterations.

<sup>27</sup> Filliozat 1947: 228; Konow 1929: xix-xx; Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 450

<sup>28</sup> The description of the territory of Jibin in this *Han shu* passage conforms more closely with the plains of Gandhāra than the mountain valleys of northern Pakistan, Kashmir, or Afghanistan: “The

Stylistic affinities between animals depicted on bronze vessels in Saka burial sites in the Pamirs and similar vessels from Imit in the Ishkoman valley support the hypothesis of a Saka migration through northern Pakistan. Two bronze objects found after a landslide near Imit in the Ishkoman Valley about fifty miles northwest of Gilgit provide archaeological evidence of close connections between this area and the Pamir region in the middle to end of the first millennium BCE.<sup>29</sup> One of these objects, a small bronze vessel with a protrusion in the shape of a horse's head, is very similar to bronze vessels with handles or spouts in the form of the heads of goats, sheep, and horses which have been discovered in burial sites of the fourth to third century BCE in the Pamir mountains of southern Tajikistan.<sup>30</sup> Litvinskij (1993: 141-3) proposes that the bronze vessel from Imit belongs to the same period as the bronze vessels from the Pamir excavations and therefore illustrates cultural and historical ties between Gilgit and Pamir.

The other object found at Imit is a bronze rhyton with a lower half in the shape of a centaur figure holding an ibex (Fig. 2.3.1: Bronze Rhyton in the shape of a centaur holding an ibex), which serves as a spout for the drinking vessel.<sup>31</sup> Stein suggested a date for this object sometime during the Kuṣāṇa period in the first three

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land of Chi-pin is flat and the climate is temperate. There is lucerne, with a variety of vegetation and rare trees, sandalwood, "oaks", catalpa, bamboo, and the lac tree. [The inhabitants] grow the five field crops, grapes and various sorts of fruit, and they manure their orchards and arable land. The land is low and damp, producing rice, and fresh vegetables are eaten in winter" (Hulsewé 1979: 105-6). In other Chinese sources, the location of Jibin shifts between Kapiśa (ancient Begram), Gandhāra, and Kashmir in different periods (see 1.4.2).

<sup>29</sup> Errington and Cribb 1992: 88-90, nos. 95-96; Stein 1944: 14-16, pl. IIIa

<sup>30</sup> Jettmar 1979: 921-922, fig. 5; 1991a: 1-2, fig. 1; Litvinskij 1993: 141-143, ill. 1-7

centuries CE based on affinities between the depiction of the centaur and the art of the Hellenistic Near East, since “models of Hellenistic craftsmanship were readily accessible” (1944: 15). Rejecting Stein’s hypothesis of Hellenistic influence, Litvinskij (1993: 144) instead compares the bronze rhyton from northern Pakistan to a ceramic rhyton with an ibex figure in the lower part from Demavend in western Iran from the first or second century BCE. Boardman adopts a position between Stein and Litvinskij:

It is probable that the source of this piece is . . . somewhere rather tangentially in touch with the Hellenistic Greek world, in this case probably Greek Bactria, but more committed to nomad animal arts. The find-place and associations of the piece are on the route south from Central Asia into north-west Pakistan. (Errington and Cribb 1992: 89)

According to Fussman, “Cette trouvaille prouve l’existence de relations entre le Pamir et la haute vallée de Gilgit aux IIe-Ier siècles avant n.è., et montre que la vallée de Gilgit a pu servir de route aux tribus saka du Pamir qui s’infiltrèrent en Inde aux alentours de n.è.” (1978: 3-4). Salomon (1996: 438-439) points out that the Imit rhyton with an ibex spout is very similar in form and function to a silver Buddhist reliquary (formed by two goblets joined together) with the figure of an ibex joined to the top (Fig. 2.3.2: Silver Buddhist reliquary with ibex figure).<sup>32</sup> Stylistic and chronological correlations between the animal figures on the bronze vessel and rhyton from Imit in the Ishkoman Valley, the bronze vessels from Pamir graves, and

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<sup>31</sup> Source: Errington and Cribb 1992: 20, no. 95, 88-9; Stein 1944: 14-15, pl. IIIa

<sup>32</sup> Source: Salomon 1996: 419, fig. 1. The Kharoṣṭhī inscription on the reliquary gives the names of Kharayosta, an Indo-Scythian official with the title of *yabgu-rāja*, and Indravarman, a prince

the silver Buddhist reliquary reflect the transmission of Central Asian cultural influences to northwestern Pakistan and India through interconnected series of mountain passes and river valleys.

Several rock drawings from the Upper Indus show the influence of so-called animal style of ornamentation associated with Saka nomads from Central Asia. Features of animal style art which appear in rock art from northern Pakistan include muscular bodies composed of s-shaped spirals, long tails ending in hooks, and hooves ending in sharp points as if the animals are “standing on tiptoe” (Fig. 2.3.3: Animal Style ibex pursued by a snow leopard from Chilas I).<sup>33</sup> Elements of animal style are also visible in a bronze plaque decorated with the figure of an ibex whose shoulders and rear legs are formed by an s-shaped spiral (Fig. 2.3.4: Bronze Plaque of an ibex from the Kandia Valley).<sup>34</sup> Although Jettmar remarks that “stylistic approach alone would favor the conclusion that the carvings were made between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.” (1991a: 5), he also stresses that inhabitants of the Upper Indus subsequently transformed these patterns and adopted them as “heraldic symbols” (see 2.1). Rather than representing “actual” animal style, Jettmar instead suggests that these drawings were anachronistic local adaptations of “retarded” animal style, which “had become just one of several systems to proclaim ethnic and social identity in an

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(*kumara*) and commander (*stratega*) of the Apraca dynasty. Both of these figures are known from coins and inscriptions of the late first century BCE and early first century CE.

<sup>33</sup> Source: Jettmar and Thewalt 1985: photo 8

<sup>34</sup> Source: Jettmar and Thewalt 1985: photo 10. The plaque was purchased by Jettmar in the Kandia Valley between Shatial and Swāt (Jettmar 1991a: 6).

area which for a while was the meeting place of many peoples and religions” (ibid., 10).<sup>35</sup>

Some Sakas followed routes from Central Asia to northwestern India through the mountain valleys of northern Pakistan, while other groups of Sakas came through Afghanistan and western Iran. At the beginning of the first century BCE two or possibly three groups of Sakas poised “at the doors of India” (Filliozat 1947: 230) entered South Asia in simultaneous independent migrations:

- a) Sakas from the north (perhaps coming from Khotan) took the ‘Pamir routes’ through the Karakorum mountains to Swat and Gandhāra;
- b) Sakas crossed the Hindu Kush under pressure from the Yuezhi to mountain valleys of northeastern Afghanistan;
- c) Sakas coming from the southwest (Sakastān and Arachosia) took control of Śakadvīpa (modern Sindh in southern Pakistan).

*Han shu* references to the “Suspended Crossing” (Hulsewé 1979: 99, 109-111)<sup>36</sup> on the way to Jibin indicate Saka migrations directly to the south through the Pamir, Karakorum, Hindu Kush, and Himalayas via the Indus and Swat valleys to Gandhāra.

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<sup>35</sup> See Jettmar 1967a; 1979: 920-922; 1982: 302; and Jettmar and Thewalt 1985: 14-15 for further discussions of animal style art in petroglyphs from northern Pakistan.

<sup>36</sup> The route of Han envoys to Jibin via the Suspended Crossing is described in the *Han shu* as follows: “they pass over the ranges [known as the hills of the] Greater and Lesser Headache, and the slopes of the Red Earth and the Fever of the Body. These cause a man to suffer fever; he has no colour, his head aches and he vomits; asses and stock animals all suffer in this way. Furthermore there are the Three Pools and the Great Rock Slopes, with a path that is a foot and six or seven inches wide, but leads forward for a length of thirty *li*, overlooking a precipice whose depth is unfathomed. Travellers passing on horse or foot hold on to one another and pull each other along with ropes; and only after a journey of more than two thousand *li* do they reach the Suspended Crossing” (Hulsewé

Narain proposes that “The Sai probably came via the Terek Pass to the Kashgar area, and thence, instead of turning left to Yarkand, we suggest they took the direct route to Tashkurgan, from which they proceeded via one of the northern passes to Gilgit and thus reached the Hien-tu [Xuan du]” (1957: 135). Despite several difficult but not impassable physical barriers, gradual migrations by various groups of Saka nomads via the ‘Pamir route’ across interconnected series of passes and river valleys was likely.<sup>37</sup>

Sakas from Central Asia and Iran also arrived in South Asia by more indirect routes through the south and west after conflicts with the Graeco-Bactrians and Parthians. Several scholars have attempted to identify Sakas among the groups of nomads listed by Strabo [based on Apollodorus] and Justin [based on Pompeius Trogus] which caused the downfall of the Greek rulers of Bactria and Sogdia in the middle of the second century BCE.<sup>38</sup> Although Tarn (1951: 283 ff.) disputes a Saka

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1979: 110-111). Jettmar 1987b locates the “Suspended Crossing” between Sazin and Jalkot in the gorge of the Upper Indus southwest of Shatial.

<sup>37</sup> Saka migrations directly from the north are favored by Dani 1989: 119; Fussman 1978: 3-4; Jettmar 1967: 4, 1991: 5; Litvinskij 1993: 147; and Narain 1957: 135-138, among others. Rapson (1968 [1922]: 508-509) denies that a “direct invasion from the north” took place due to the “physical impossibility” of this route, but his assumptions about invasions by “hordes” of Sakas and the inaccessibility of the mountain passes probably reflected conditions in the early twentieth century, when this region was a buffer zone between the British empire in India and the Russian empire (see 2.9).

<sup>38</sup> For analysis of references by Strabo (11.8.2) to the *Asioi*, *Pasianoi*, *Tocharoi*, and *Sacarauoi* and by Justin (41) to the *Saraucae* and *Asiani*, see Filliozat 1947: 228; Konow 1929: xxi-xxii; Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 450; Mitchener 1976: 5. 396-397; and Narain 1957: 131-134. The *Sacarauoi/Saraucae* are often identified with Iranian Sakas and Chinese Sai, but as Narain (1957: 133) points out, Strabo and other classical authors were unclear about distinctions between the various groups of nomads. Fussman emphasizes the lack of clear distinctions in both Chinese and western classical sources: “Sai and Yuezhi are Chinese names for shifting confederations of tribes without any linguistic, ethnic (i.e. racial) and probably cultural, unity. These confederations no longer existed as political entities when they reached Bactria. This fact explains why Greek authors, who name four groups of tribes, do not

conquest of Bactria, the end of Greek rule in Bactria and Saka migrations to South Asia were probably related to instability in Central Asia, Iran, and northwestern India. Konow suggests:

[I]t may be surmised that the Sai-Wang exodus was the beginning of the Scythian pressure on the Greek empire in Bactria, and it is a curious fact that it seems to coincide with the Indian conquests of Demetrius which may, or may not, be due to a desire for strengthening his position in another direction. (1929: xxii)

After Greek settlers vacated Ai Khanum around 145 BCE, Sakas and other groups of nomads may have replaced departing Graeco-Bactrians who moved south (Fussman 1996: 247).<sup>39</sup> Since Indo-Greek successors of the Graeco-Bactrians maintained control of Kapiśa during the mid-second century BCE, mass Saka migrations directly through central Afghanistan were unlikely (Narain 1957: 137). Narain's observation that "the movement of the Sai was probably not one long arduous and continuous march" (ibid.) fits the context of gradual migrations by loosely related groups of Saka nomads over several decades or generations via many different routes from Central Asia to South Asia.

Saka conflicts and eventual accommodations with the Arsacid dynasty of Parthia between ca. 130 - 80 BCE resulted from their movement into western and southern Afghanistan. According to Justin (42.1-2), the Parthian ruler Phraates II, who succeeded his father Mithridates I in 138 BCE, died during a campaign against

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know them. Perhaps there were more, among them some who never belonged to the former Sai or Yuezhi confederacy" (1996: 252).

<sup>39</sup> Mitchener (1976: 5. 396, Maps 29-36) proposes that the Saka / Graeco-Bactrian frontier was the valley of the Khulm river in northern Afghanistan, since he believes that the Indo-Greek successors maintained control of Hindu Kush passes where silver mines were located.



the Sakas, and conflicts between the Parthians and Sakas on their eastern borderlands continued during the reigns of Artabanus I (127-123 BCE) and Mithridates II (123-88 BCE).<sup>40</sup> During the reign of Mithridates II, an accommodation seems to have been reached when Sakas settled in southern Afghanistan and southeastern Iran (Sakastān) under the nominal control of a Parthian Suren. Around 110 BCE, Sakas probably reached Arachosia (modern Kandahar in southeastern Afghanistan), and from there continued to migrate through the Bolan and Mulla passes of modern Baluchistan to the Lower and Middle Indus valley.<sup>41</sup> The region of southern Pakistan roughly corresponding to modern Sindh became known in Indian literary sources as Śakadvīpa or Śākadvīpa, meaning “Śaka continent,” or literally “island of the Śakas” (Sircar 1971: 24-25). Śakadvīpa served as a base for Saka conquests of Gujarat and western India, where the Western Kṣatrapas continued to rule until third century CE (see 4.3.2.4-5). As Sakas migrated from Central Asia, they adopted Hellenistic and Iranian models of administration, official titles, coinage, architecture, and art, which they in turn brought to the Indian subcontinent (Marshall 1951: 1.56).

Maues was one of the earliest Indo-Scythian rulers in the northwest during the early first century BCE. His name is preserved in bilingual Greek (Maues) and Kharoṣṭhī (Moa) coins and a Kharoṣṭhī inscription from Taxila (Moga). The origins of Maues/Moga/Moa are obscure: he may have been connected with the Indo-Scythians of Sakastān, or he could have belonged to another branch of Sakas which

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<sup>40</sup> Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 451 -2; Mitchiner 1976: 5. fns. 552-554; Narain 1957: 140-141

migrated from the north through the mountains to Gandhāra and Taxila.<sup>42</sup> In giving himself the title of “King of Kings” in bilingual Greek (*ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΕΩΝ*) and Kharoṣṭhī (*rajatirajasa*) coin legends, Maues/Moa imitated Parthian royal titles, probably following the death of Mithridates II in 88 BCE (Konow 1929: xxix-xxxi). As Rapson observes, “the assumption of the imperial title, ‘King of Kings,’ by these Śaka and Pahlava suzerains is most significant as testifying, in a manner which cannot be mistaken, to the diminished power of Parthia at this period” (1968 [1922]: 513).<sup>43</sup>

A Kharoṣṭhī inscription on a copper plate from Taxila also provides important material evidence of Maues’ reign (Konow 1929: 23-29, no. XIII, pl. V.1). The inscription dated in the year 78 of an unspecified era during the reign of “*mahārāja* Moga the Great” records the establishment of Buddhist relics by a donor named

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<sup>41</sup> Konow 1929: xxxi; Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 451 -2; Mitchiner 1976: 5.397; Rosenfield 1967: 123; Tarn 1951: 320

<sup>42</sup> Mitchiner (1976: 5. 457 ff., maps 40-42) proposes that Maues expanded his kingdom northwards to Taxila and Gandhāra after inheriting the area around Bannu and the Kurram valley when Vonones and Spalahores were powerful in Arachosia (Kandahar), based on similar control marks of coins. On the other hand, Narain (1957: 145 ff.) interprets similarities between monograms on coins of Indo-Greek rulers and those of Maues to mean that Maues moved southwards from Hazara and Swat to Gandhāra and Taxila. Narain points out that Maues did not come from Sakastān because none of his coins are found in Afghanistan, Baluchistan or Sindh (1957: 23). Bivar (1984: 14) agrees with Jenkins (1955) that numismatic evidence does not connect Maues with the Sakas of Arachosia, and instead suggests that Maues led a peaceful migration of Sakas to the area around Taxila and gained control from the Indo-Greek rulers during a civil crisis. An origin of Maues in the north is also supported by Fussman (1994b: 32), who distinguishes Sakas led by Maues migrating across the Pamirs from other groups of Sakas coming from Merv and Seistān affiliated with the Azes dynasty and from the Indo-Parthians in Arachosia and Seistān. However, attempts by Dani (1983: 62-64, 96-102, nos. 72, 78; 1989: 119-121) to identify the name of Maues (Moga) in Kharoṣṭhī graffiti at Chilas II are not accepted by Fussman (1989b: 18, no. 9,7, pl. 20; 23, no. 13,4, pl. 26, 29), and are not reliable evidence for Saka migration routes through northern Pakistan.

<sup>43</sup> Rapson (1968 [1922]: 513) also points out that Tigranes, an Armenian ruler on the western frontier of Parthia from 77-73 BCE, also assumed the title of “king of kings.”

Patika, the son of the *kṣatrapa* Liaka Kusulaka. Although a precise date can not be determined because the initial year of the era in question remains uncertain,<sup>44</sup> this inscription demonstrates that Liaka Kusulaka, Saka *kṣatrapa* of Taxila and the adjacent plain of Chach (*cukhsa*), acknowledged the authority of *mahārāja* Moga as his overlord. Subordinate local and regional rulers like Liaka Kusulaka were “powerful chiefs whose main duty was no doubt the guarding of the northern frontiers and Indus crossings” (Marshall 1951: 1.47). Decentralized administration through networks of loosely affiliated officials who acknowledged a more powerful leader in their coin legends and dating formulae in inscriptions continued after the period of Maues.

Numismatic sequences and epigraphical evidence of Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions show that Azes followed Maues as the most powerful Indo-Scythian ruler in the northwest in 58 BCE, a date corresponding to the beginning of the so-called “Vikrama Saṃvat” era which is still in used in India (Marshall 1951: 1.48; Salomon 1998: 182).<sup>45</sup> Like his predecessor, Azes (Aya in Kharoṣṭhī) adopted the title of

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<sup>44</sup> For a brief summary of views on the initial year of the era of the Taxila copper plate of the year 78 as well as a handful of other early Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī inscriptions which may belong to an “Old Śaka” era, see Salomon 1998: 181, section 5.5.1.2. Tarn 1951: 494-502 (Appendix 16: The Era of the Moga copperplate from Taxila) proposed that a “first Saka era” beginning ca. 155 BCE would place the Taxila copper plate ca. 77 BCE, but a consensus has not yet been reached; for example, Fussman 1980: 35 ff. prefers dating this inscription according to the “ère de Eucratides” beginning in 172 BCE. Bopearachchi (1999: 124), following Jenkins (1955), places Maues in Taxila ca. 90-80 BCE because his coins are overstruck by Apollodotus, and the coins of Apollodotus’ successor Hippostratus were overstruck by Azes. However, this chronological sequence entails a long gap between the Taxila copper plate of Patika and the Mathura lion capitol inscription in which Patika is referred to as *mahākṣatrapa*.

<sup>45</sup> According to the *Kālakācāryakathānaka* (a Prakrit biography of the Jain teacher Kālaka), the beginning of the “Vikrama” era marks the year when king Vikramāditya drove the Śakas out of

“King of Kings” and iconography of Greek and Indian gods and goddesses from the coins of contemporary Indo-Greeks (Mitchener 1976: 6.481 ff.). Indo-Greek power in territories of central Afghanistan and eastern Punjab rapidly diminished during the second half of the first century BCE as Indo-Scythians predominated (Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 459). Azes and his successors Azilises and Azes II administered Taxila and other areas of northwestern Pakistan and India through regional rulers with Iranian, Greek, and Indian titles (*mahākṣatrapa*, *kṣatrapa*, *meridarch*, *strategos*, *raya* [Sanskrit *rājan*]).

Apraca kings (*Apraca/Avaca-raya*), commanders (*stratega*), and other officials who ruled Bajaur and probably adjacent mountain valleys of eastern Afghanistan implicitly acknowledged the authority of the Azes dynasty in their Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions dedicating Buddhist relics by dating them in years of the Azes era corresponding to the beginning of the first century CE (Salomon 1996: 450).<sup>46</sup>

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Ujjain (Filliozat 1947: 230; Konow 1929: xxvii; Lamotte 1988 [1958]: 455; Marshall 1951: 1.50-51). However, the accuracy of this account is questionable because there is no epigraphical or numismatic evidence of a ruler named Vikramāditya in central India during the first century BCE (Salomon 1982: 66). It is likely that credit for founding this area was given many centuries later to the Gupta emperor Candragupta II (376-414 CE), whose epithet was “Vikramāditya” (Bivar 1981: 370; Sircar 1965a: 254-255). Since the legend of king Vikramāditya was subsequently linked with this date, the reckoning system might be more accurately termed the ‘Azes Saṃvat’ era since its earliest use occurs in Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions dated in years of “the great king Azes” (*maharayasa ayasa*).

<sup>46</sup> Dated reliquary inscriptions include those of Indravarma in Azes year 63 (6 CE), Ramaka in Azes year 74 (17 CE), Śatruleka in Azes year 77 (20 CE), Menander and Vijayamitra (the founder of the Apraca dynasty) in year 5 of an unspecified era, which would correspond to 53 BCE if it belongs to the Azes era instead of a regnal year (Fussman 1993b: 108), and Prahodi in year 32 of an unspecified era, which would correspond to 26 BCE if it is not a regnal year of Vijayamitra who is named in the inscription (*viyidamitrassa avacarayasa*) (Sadakata 1996: 303). For bibliographic information on publications of Apraca Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions, see “List of Inscriptions Cited” in Salomon 1996: 450 and Falk 1998, who revises the reading of the Śatruleka reliquary inscription (previously labeled the “Bhagamoya” reliquary inscription) and challenges the chronology of Apraca inscriptions proposed by Salomon.

Since the name of the Apraca commander Aśpavarman also occurs in a Kharoṣṭhī inscription and coins from Taxila and manuscript fragments perhaps from the Jalalabad area (Salomon 1999: 145-150), it seems likely that the Apracas' influence also extended beyond Bajaur to Swat, Taxila, and Nagarāhāra in eastern Afghanistan during the late first century BCE and the beginning of the Common Era. The Apracas of the northwestern frontier were apparently connected with the Indo-Scythian rulers of Mathurā through Kharayosta, an important Indo-Scythian official with the title of *Yaguraṃṇā*<sup>47</sup> on a silver goblet with an ibex figure (Fig. 2.3.2) rededicated as a Buddhist reliquary by Indravarman, the father of Aśpavarman.

Kharayosta is the 'heir apparent' (*yuvaraṇā*) in the Mathura lion capital Kharoṣṭhī inscription of Mahākṣatrapa Rajula (Konow 1929: 30-49, no. 15, pls. VI-IX).<sup>48</sup> Kharayosta's daughter, Ayasia Kamūia, was responsible for the main act commemorated in the inscription: the dedication of Buddhist relics and donation of a stūpa (*thuva*) and saṃghārāma (*sagharama*) to a Sarvāstivādin Buddhist community.<sup>49</sup> One of the officials listed as benefactors of the merit gained by her

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<sup>47</sup> Salomon relates Kharayosta's title of *yaguraṃṇā* in this Kharoṣṭhī inscription to Turkic *yabgu* meaning "tribal chief" and Sanskrit *rājñah* (genitive singular form of *rājan* "king") (1996: 440-441). In this inscription, Kharayosta is also labeled a "son of *mahākṣatrapa*" (*mahākṣatrapa-putrasa*), but the name of his father is not written here. In bilingual Greek and Kharoṣṭhī coin legends, *ḡṣatrapa* Kharaosta is the son of Arta/Arṭa (Greek: ΧΑΡΑΗΩΣΤΕΙ ΣΑΤΡΑΠΕΙ ΑΡΤΑ ΥΟΥ / Kharoṣṭhī: *ḡṣatrapasa pra Kharaostasa Arṭasa putrasa*).

<sup>48</sup> According to Konow (1929: xxxv-xxxvi, 36), the title of *yuvarāja* may indicate that Kharayosta was heir to Maues based on his hypothesis that Kharayosta's father Arṭa was Maues' brother, but this relationship is uncertain. Lamotte (1988 [1958]: 459) regards Kharayosta as the successor to Patika as *ḡṣatrapa* of Cukhsa, and Marshall notes that Kharosta's copper coins "suggest that he probably followed Patika in the Chukhsa satrapy" (1951: 1.55).

<sup>49</sup> In Konow's translation of a passage in the inscription as "the solemnities over the illustrious king Muki and his horse" (1929: 49) and his "highly hypothetical" (1929:40) explanation of this passage

donation was Mahākṣatrapa Kusulu(k)a Patika, whose father Liaka Kusuluka was the Mahākṣatrapa of Cukhsa when Patika himself established Buddhist relics at Taxila during the reign of Maues (Konow 1929: 23-29, no. 13, pl. V.1). When the Mathurā lion capital was written (probably in the last decades of the first century BCE), Indo-Scythian rulers dominated the main trade route between Mathurā and Taxila known in Indian literature as the Uttarāpatha (4.2).

In the beginning of the first century CE, the next generation of Indo-Scythians, including Mahākṣatrapa Śoḍāsa (son of Rajula) in Mathurā,<sup>50</sup> Mahākṣatrapa Jihonika in Cukhsa,<sup>51</sup> and the Apraca Stratega Aśpavarman maintained the stability and presumably the prosperity of the Saka realm in the northwest. At some point, these powerful regional sub-rulers who had previously administered territories under Azes II shifted their allegiance to the Indo-Parthian Mahārāja Gondophares. The dates for the reign of Gondophares in Arachosia, Sindh, Gandhāra, Taxila, and western Punjab are fairly well-established based on the distribution of his coins and a Kharoṣṭhī inscription dated in his twenty-sixth regnal year and in year 103 of the Azes/Vikrama era corresponding to 46 CE reportedly from Takht-i-Bāhī,

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as a funeral ceremony for Maues should be revised based on parallels from other Kharoṣṭhī reliquary donations discovered since the publication of Konow's CII 2.1 in 1929.

<sup>50</sup> Śoḍāsa has the titles of *kṣatrapa* (*kṣatrave*) in the Mathurā lion capital inscription (Konow 1929: 48) and *mahākṣatrapa* in a Brāhmī inscriptions from Mathurā, including one with a date in year 72 of the Azes/Vikrama era corresponding to 15 CE written on an *āyāgapāṭa* votive plaque from the Jain site of Kaṅkāli Tīlā at Mathurā (Sircar 1965b: 120-121, no. 25).

<sup>51</sup> Jihonika appears with the titles of *kṣatrapa* on coins and a Kharoṣṭhī inscription on a silver vase found at Sirkap in Taxila (Konow 1929: 81-82, no. XXX, pl. XXXVI) and *mahākṣatrapa* in a Kharoṣṭhī manuscript fragment of an avadāna in the British Library collection (Salomon 1999: 141-145). The figure 191 in the Taxila silver vase inscription which is often mentioned as a date in the "Old Śaka" era may instead refer to a measurement of weight (*ibid.*, 144, n. 4).

one of the main Buddhist monasteries in Gandhāra (Konow 1929: 57-62, no. XX, pl. XII.1).<sup>52</sup> Gondophares may also be identified with King Gudnafar in the apocryphal account of the life of St. Thomas the Apostle, who, according to late hagiographical sources, visited India early in the first century CE.<sup>53</sup> Since Gondophares appears to have been directly followed by Abdagases I and Sases in Gandhāra and Taxila based on their coin sequences, “the numismatic evidence shows that the Indo-Parthian kingdom still enjoyed remarkable unity in AD 78” (Aram 1999: 45). Although precise dates and regions in which the successors of Gondophares ruled must remain uncertain, it is clear from the excavations at Taxila, widespread distribution of coins, and artistic developments in Gandhāran sculpture that the period of Parthian hegemony in the middle of the first century CE was “a period of great prosperity and cultural achievement” (Rosenfield 1967: 129).

Table 2.3: Relative Chronology of Sakas and Parthians in the Northwest

Dates:	King of Kings <i>mahārājas</i>	Takila and Cukhsa	Apraca dynasty	Mathurā rulers
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<sup>52</sup> For recent research based on numismatic evidence, see Aram 1999, Boppearachchi 1993: 57-60, 1998: 219-223, 1999: 135-139, and Senior 1996: 36 ff., 1997. According to Aram, “He extended his territory from Sistan, Arachosia, Gandhara/Taxila to the area around Jammu. These regions are clearly recognizable as individual minting districts in the coins of Gondophares so that there is no doubt about the extent of his kingdom” (1999: 37). Senior, however, identifies Gondophares in the Takht-i-Bāhī Kharoṣṭhī inscription with Sases, a successor of Gondophares, and prefers to place the end of Gondophares (I) in the last decade of the first century BCE (1996: 36-7; 1997: 3-4). This chronological “Upsetting the Applecart” (Senior 1997: 17) by suggesting multiple rulers named Gondophares has not so far found much acceptance among numismatists.

<sup>53</sup> Fussman questions the authenticity of St. Thomas’ encounter with Gudnafar/Gondophares, and expresses caution about its use as evidence for the history of Taxila and the northwest: “Cela ne signifie ni que Thomas - à supposer que lui-même ait existé - l’ait rencontré, ni qu’ils étaient des contemporains. Cela nous apprend seulement que le nom de ce souverain indo-parthe étaient encore connu en Syrie vers 250 de n.è. Les *Actes de Saint-Thomas* ne datent pas Gondopharès et permettent encore moins d’affirmer qu’il possédait Taxila” (1998: 624-625).

Early 1 <sup>st</sup> century BCE (ca. 75 BCE)	<i>maharaya</i> <i>rajatiraja</i> Maues/Moga	<i>kṣatrapa</i> Liaka Kusuluka		Mitra rulers
58 BCE	<i>maharaja</i> <i>rajaraja</i> Azes/Aya	<i>kṣatrapa</i> Liaka Kusuluka (?)	<i>Apracaraja</i> Vijayamitra	<i>khatapa</i> ( <i>kṣatrapa</i> ) Hagāmasa
Late 1 <sup>st</sup> century BCE (ca. 30-15 BCE)	<i>maharaja</i> <i>rajaraja</i> Azilises/Ayiliṣa	<i>mahākṣatrava</i> Kusulua Patika <i>kṣatrapa</i> <i>yuva/yaguraja</i> Kharayosta	<i>Apacaraja</i> Indrivasu <i>stratega</i> Viśpa/Viṣṇu- varman	<i>khatapa</i> ( <i>kṣatrapa</i> ) Rāmadatta <i>mahākṣatrapa</i> Rajula/ Rajuvula
Early 1 <sup>st</sup> century CE (ca. 15 CE)	<i>maharaja</i> <i>rajaraja</i> Azes/Aya [II]	<i>yaguraya</i> Kharayosta	<i>stratega</i> Indravarman	<i>mahākṣatrapa</i> Śoḍāsa
Mid- 1 <sup>st</sup> century CE (ca. 46 CE)	<i>maharaya</i> Guduvhara/ Gondophares	<i>kṣatrapa</i> , <i>mahākṣatrapa</i> Jihonika	<i>stratega</i> Aśpavarman	

Indo-Scythian and Parthian regional officials in control of major commercial centers along the Uttarāpatha (4.2) encouraged the development of trade networks and supported Indian religious institutions. Indo-Scythian rulers and officials such as Patika (*mahākṣatrapa*, son of Liaka Kusuluka, *kṣatrapa* of Cukhsa), Ayasia Kamuia (daughter of Kharayosta and chief queen of Rajula, *mahākṣatrapa* of Mathurā), and Indravarman (Apraca *stratega*) and his wife Uttarā were generous donors. Other Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions recording the establishment of Buddhist relics in stūpas and donations to monasteries in Gandhāra, Taxila, and Mathurā prove that Sakas, Pahlavas, and other Iranians were active lay supporters of the Buddhist community in the northwest (Fussman 1994b: 32-33). While the Indo-Scythian period certainly corresponds to “the great flowering of Gandhāran Buddhism” (Salomon 1999: 180),



Saka support of Buddhism did not preclude their patronage of other religious traditions or imply that their old beliefs were quickly abandoned. Instead, as Marshall concludes from the Taxila excavations, “while clinging to their own Iranian faiths, the Sakas showed a tolerant and sympathetic attitude towards every religion” (1951: 1.57-58).

Although Indian literary sources like the *Yugapurāṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Kāmasūtra*, and the Buddhist *Aśokāvadāna* frequently characterize Śakas, Pahlavas, Yavanas, and other virtually indistinguishable groups of foreigners as ferocious barbarian invaders (Lamotte [1958] 1988: 488-489), archaeological, epigraphic, and numismatic evidence instead reflects their gradual assimilation into Indian society as Kṣatriya rulers and soldiers. Cultural exchange between foreigners and Indians had an interesting impact in the northwest, where “L’afflux continuel d’étrangers au Gandhāra, au Panjāb et à Mathurā, entraînant un bouleversement des mœurs, des coutumes, des techniques aussi, ne pouvait manquer d’avoir une influence sur l’air du temps” (Fussman 1994b: 30). Although previous generations of western scholars tended to overemphasize Greek contributions,<sup>54</sup> Saka influence on architecture, iconography, language, and many other spheres of Indian life around the beginning of the Common Era generally does not receive adequate attention. Ultimately, however, the Indo-Scythians “became the great intermediators through whom Indian civilization and Indian ideals spread to Central Asia and the far east” (Konow 1929:

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<sup>54</sup> Fussman 1993b corrects some misperceptions about Greek support of Buddhism by re-examining Menander’s legacy.

xxvi). The migrations of the Sakas during the last two centuries BCE and the Kuṣāṇas in first century CE from Central Asia to northwestern India eventually led to the transmission of Buddhism in the other direction - from the northwest to Central Asia and East Asia.

#### 2.4. Kuṣāṇa Impact on Northern Pakistan: 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE

During the Kuṣāṇa period in the first to third centuries CE, political, economic, religious, and cultural contact between South Asia and Central Asia greatly accelerated. Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions and Buddhist petroglyphs in the mountains and valleys of northern Pakistan directly reflect the increase in long-distance travel, trade and cultural transmission between the northwestern Indian subcontinent and eastern Central Asia, coinciding with the establishment of the Kuṣāṇa empire. Since new material evidence has recently come to light which allows some issues of Kuṣāṇa chronology and genealogy to be clarified, the historical overview of this period is emphasized more than the following periods. These historical issues are directly relevant not only for establishing dates for inscriptions and associated rock drawings, but also for understanding their significance in the context of cross-cultural relations between South Asia and Central Asia during the early centuries CE.

Just as the Sakas migrated to South Asia after being driven out of their Central Asian homelands, the Kuṣāṇas also arrived in the northwestern Indian after a long migration across Central Asia in the last few centuries BCE. The Kuṣāṇas were a

branch of the Yuezhi, a nomadic group of peoples living near Dunhuang northwest of the Gansu region in western China until conflicts with the Xiongnu led to their migration around the Tarim Basin to Bactria between ca. 165-128 BCE, which in turn caused some groups of Sakas to migrate to South Asia and the power of the Graeco-Bactrians to decline (Rosenfield 1967: 10). Similar passages<sup>55</sup> in chapter 123 of *Shi ji* (Zürcher 1968: 360) and chapter 96A of the *Hanshu* describe Yuezhi conflicts with the Xiongnu and the subsequent migrations of the “Great” Yuezhi to Bactria:

Ta Yüeh-chih [Da Yuezhi] was originally a land of nomads. The people moved around in company with their stock-animals and followed the same way of life as the Hsiung-nu [Xiongnu]. There were more than 100,000 trained bowmen, and for this reason they relied on their strength and thought lightly of the Hsiung-nu [Xiongnu]. Originally [the people] dwelt between Tun-huang [Dunhuang] and Ch’i-lien [Qilian]. Then the time came when the *Shan-yü* Mao Tun [*Shan yu* Mao Dun] attacked and defeated the Yüeh-chih [Yuezhi], and the *Shan-yü* Lao-shang [*Shan yu* Lao Shang] killed [the king] of the Yüeh-chih [Yuezhi], making his skull into a drinking vessel. The Yüeh-chih [Yuezhi] thereupon went far away, passing Ta Yüan [Dayuan]<sup>56</sup> and proceeding west to attack and subjugate Ta Hsia [Daxia].<sup>57</sup> The principal city was established north of the Kuei [Gui] River<sup>58</sup> to form the king’s court. The remaining small group of [of the Yuezhi] who were unable to leave sought protection among the

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<sup>55</sup> Since the contents of *Shi ji* 123 and passages in *Han shu* covering the period ca. 210 - 90 BCE are almost identical, it would seem that relevant passages from *Shi ji*, the earlier text attributed to Sima Tan and his son Sima Qian ca. 100 BCE were later copied in the *Han shu*, compiled by Ban Gu ca. 80 CE (Zürcher 1968: 363). However, Loewe (in Hulsewé 1979: 20) has shown that *Shi ji* 123 was lost, and *Han shu* 61 (supposedly based on the accounts of Zhang Qian and Li Guangli) was used for its recompilation around 120 CE, when both texts began to be transmitted independently. Zürcher also acknowledges that the account of Zhang Qian’s life in *Shi ji* 123 is “probably a patchwork made up of fragments from *Han-shu* 61 and 96” but states that “there is, however, no reason to suspect the authenticity of Chang Ch’ien’s [Zhang Qian] own report” (1968: 358). Comments by Fussman (1998: 631 ff.) on the use and reuse of sources in the Chinese historiographical tradition are helpful in understanding these textual complexities.

<sup>56</sup> Hulsewé (1979: 131, fn. 325) notes that Dayuan is usually identified with the Ferghana Basin in modern eastern Uzbekistan, but also refers to the opinions of Pulleyblank, who prefers to identify Dayuan with Sogdia.

<sup>57</sup> Daxia is usually identified with Bactria, although the reference to the principal city north of the Oxus supports an identification with the Ferghana valley north of the Oxus in modern Uzbekistan, where most scholars prefer to locate Dayuan.

<sup>58</sup> Clearly the Oxus River (Amu Darya).

Ch'iang [Qiang] tribes of the Southern Mountains and were termed the Hsiao Yüeh-chih [Xiao Yuezhi].<sup>59</sup> (Hulsewé 1979: 120-121)

Following this passage in the *Han shu* is a list of the five divisions of the Yuezhi realm, which scholars have attempted to identify with specific areas of northern Afghanistan and northeastern Pakistan, including Wakhan, Chitral, Panjshir valley, Kabul, and a region north of Gandhāra called Guishuang (ibid., 121-123, fn. 288-296). This list of the five *Yabgu*<sup>60</sup> divisions is repeated with some important differences in chapter 118.9 of the *Hou Han shu* (*History of the Later Han*) compiled by Fan Ye (398-446 CE), who based his account of the Western Regions on a report by General Ban Yong before 125 CE.<sup>61</sup> Ban Yong's report also refers to early Kuṣāṇa genealogy and conquests:

More than a hundred years later,<sup>62</sup> the *yabgu* of Kuei-shuang [Gui shuang] (named) Ch'iu-chiu-ch'üeh [Qiu Jiuque] attacked and destroyed the (other) four *yabgu* and established himself as (their) king; the kingdom was named Kuei-shuang

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<sup>59</sup> The Xiao Yuezhi are often referred to as the “Lesser Yuezhi” which did not migrate to Bactria, but instead remained among the Proto-Tibetan tribes of the Nan-shan mountain range of the Kara-nor region (Zürcher 1968: 360).

<sup>60</sup> The non-Chinese term for these divisions (*Xi hou*) corresponds to the Central Asian title *yabgu*, which was adopted by the Kuṣāṇas in their coin legends (Hulsewé 1979: 121, fn. 288; Rosenfield 1967: 11).

<sup>61</sup> See Pulleyblank 1968: 247 ff. and Zürcher 1968: 367. Fussman 1998: 635 points out that Fan Ye probably compiled the information on the Western Regions in chapter 118 *Hou Han shu* from other sources which refer to Ban Yong, without necessarily reading Ban Yong's report himself, and may have attempted to abbreviate or edit the material in an attempt to eliminate perceived inconsistencies, so that “effectivement *Hou Han Shu* 118 a est composé comme une mosaïque” (1998: 636).

<sup>62</sup> Since these events took place more than 100 years after the Yuezhi realm in northern Afghanistan was split into five divisions, probably in the late second or early first century BCE, an approximate chronology for the early Kuṣāṇa conquests in the northwest can be suggested. According to Rosenfield, “If 135 B.C. is assumed to be the approximate mean date for the entry of the Kushans into the Oxus region, this unification under the Kuei-shang-wang must not have occurred before 35 B.C.” (1967: 11). The round figure of 100 years, as well as Qiu Jiuque's age of 80+ years, should probably be interpreted as general time periods rather than absolute dates.

[Guishuang]. (This) king invaded An-hsi [Anxi],<sup>63</sup> took the country of Kao-fu [Gaofu],<sup>64</sup> and, moreover, destroyed P'u-ta [Puda]<sup>65</sup> and Chi-pin [Jibin]<sup>66</sup> and completely possessed their territory. Ch'iu-chiu-ch'üeh [Qiu Jiuque] died at the age of more than eighty years, and his son Yen-kao-chen [Yan Gaozhen] succeeded him as king. He in his turn destroyed T'ien-chu [Tianzhu] (India)<sup>67</sup> and placed there a general to control it. Since then the Yüeh-chih [Yuezhi] have been extremely rich and strong. In the various (Western) countries (their ruler) is always referred to as 'the king of Kuei-shang [Guishuang],' but the Han, basing themselves upon the old appellation, speak about "the Great Yüeh-chih [Yuezhi]. (Zürcher 1968: 367)

Based on this testimony, when a *Yabgu* of Guishuang named Qiu Jiuque established control of the other four *Yabgu* districts about a century after Yuezhi migration to the region, his entire kingdom became known as Guishuang, corresponding to K(h)uṣāṇa in Kharoṣṭhī coin legends, Koshano in Bactrian coin legends, and Kuṣāṇa in Brāhmī inscriptions (Rosenfield 1967: 7). From their base in the mountain valleys of northeastern Afghanistan and northwestern Pakistan, the Kuṣāṇas rapidly moved southwards along many of the same routes and to many of the same areas which the

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<sup>63</sup> Anxi in Chinese sources usually refers to Parthia, but an invasion of Parthia is doubtful (Fussman 1998: 638). A conflict with the Indo-Parthians in Arachosia or Gandhāra seems more likely (Rosenfield 1967: 11).

<sup>64</sup> Gaofu probably corresponds to the region around Kabul in modern Afghanistan. Because Gaofu is not listed as one of the five *Yabgu* districts but is instead included among the places conquered by Qiu Jiuque, *Hou Han shu* 118.9 differs *Han shu* 96A which includes Gaofu in its list of *Yabgu* districts.

<sup>65</sup> The location of Puda is uncertain, but Fussman (1998: 637-638) suggests Puṣkalāvātī (Sanskrit name of Charsadā, the ancient metropolis of Gandhāra) because the order in which these conquests are listed (Gaofu/Kabul - Puda/Puṣkalāvātī - Jibin/Gandhāra in general) may indicate the route of invasion.

<sup>66</sup> The range of locations suggested for Jibin in various genres of Chinese literature is discussed in 1.4.2, but in *Hou Han shu* 118.9 it is clear that Jibin is different from Gaofu, and therefore Kapiśa was probably not intended. An identification of Jibin with Kashmir in this passage is possible, but it does not seem likely that the early Kuṣāṇa conquests extended so far. Jibin in the *Hou Han shu* probably refers to Gandhāra or the northwest in general, as in the *Han shu*, but in Chinese texts related to later periods the geographical location of Jibin apparently shifts between Kashmir and Kapiśa.

<sup>67</sup> Tianzhu (India) may refer to the northwest, to the Lower Indus region, or to the Ganges-Yamuna valley. The Kuṣāṇa empire eventually included all of these areas.

Sakas had already taken, including the Parthian borderlands or Indo-Parthian domains (Anxi), Kabul in central Afghanistan (Gaofu), possibly Puṣkalāvātī (Puda), and the Gandhāran heartland in the northwest (Jibin). In the following generation(s), the Kusāṇas expanded further into northern India (Tianzhu), and “became extremely rich and strong,” presumably through their control of the Uttarāpatha from Bactria to northern India (4.2.1.2). Thus, Chinese historical chronicles compiled centuries after the actual events refer to the periods of “nomadic wandering” of the Yuezhi across Central Asia under pressure from the Xiongnu in the second century BCE, their settlement in Bactria and consolidation under the Kuṣāṇas sometime during the first century BCE, and their advances into India beginning in the first century CE.

By the middle of the first century CE, Kuṣāṇa influence extended throughout northern Pakistan to Gandhāra and Taxila. Kuṣāṇa expansion across the Hindu Kush was probably due to a decline in Indo-Greek power and turmoil among Saka and Parthian *Kṣatrapas* in the northwest (Foucher 1942-7: 2.226). The first Kuṣāṇa ruler was Kujula Kadphises, who may be identified with the *Yabgu* of Guishuang named Qiu Jiuque in *Hou Han shu* 128.9. Numismatic evidence shows that Kujula Kadphises continued to imitate posthumous types of coinage of Hermaios, the last Indo-Greek ruler of Kapiśa and the Kabul valley in central Afghanistan (Bopearachchi and Rahman 1995: 37-44). One of the earliest types of Kuṣāṇa bronze coinage has the portrait of Hermaios with a Greek legend on the obverse, and an image of Herakles with a club and lion’s skin along with a Kharoṣṭhī legend

identifying Kujula Kadphises as the “Kuṣāṇa *Yabgu* steadfast in *dharma*” (*kujula kasasa/karasa kuṣāṇa yavugasa dhramaṭhidasa*) on the reverse.<sup>68</sup> Other copper coins issued by Kujula Kadphises copy the royal portrait on the obverse from gold coins of the Roman emperor Augustus (31 BCE - 14 CE) and “transform” the image of the seated emperor on the reverse into the Kuṣāṇa ruler with a pointed cap, and identify him as Kujula Kadphises in Greek (obverse) and Kharoṣṭhī (reverse) versions of the same legend.<sup>69</sup> Kuṣāṇa imitation of Roman style coin portraits attests Roman influence (probably via Parthia) and commercial ties between the Mediterranean and South and Central Asia.

As the Kuṣāṇas progressed further into the northwest, Kujula Kadphises adopted the higher title of “Great King, King of Kings” (*maharajasa rajatirajasa* in Kharoṣṭhī legends) on coins patterned on those of Saka and Parthian rulers. Macdowall has shown that the bull and camel coin-types of Kujula Kadphises directly succeeded the bull and lion coin-types of Jihonika, the *Kṣatrapa* of Cukhsa around 30-40 CE, who previously copied the same pattern from coins of Azes II which have been found in Gandhāra and eastern Afghanistan.<sup>70</sup> More than 2,500 coins of Kujula Kadphises found in the latest strata of Sirkap indicate significant Kuṣāṇa presence at Taxila in the middle of the first century CE, before the main

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<sup>68</sup> For examples, see Errington and Cribb 1992: 66, no. 34, 81, no. 75; Mitchiner 1976: 8.681-682, Type 1044-1045; and Rosenfield 1967: 12, Type I, coins 1,2,3.

<sup>69</sup> Errington and Cribb 1992: 66-68, no. 35; Mitchiner 1976: 8.688, Type 1053; Rosenfield 1967: 13-14, Type II, coins 4,5

<sup>70</sup> MacDowall 1973: 225, pl. 16.2, a,b; 1985: 51-55; Mitchiner 1976: 8.690, Type 1055; Rosenfield 1967: 15, Type 4, coin 15.

settlement was shifted to Sirsukh during the period of Kujula Kadphises' successors.<sup>71</sup> The relation between Kuṣāṇa *Mahārāja Mahārājādhīrāja* Kujula Kadphises and Indo-Parthian *Mahārāja* Gondophares who was ruling as late as 46 CE (assuming that the year 103 of the Takht-i-Bāhī inscription refers to the Azes/Vikrama era) remains enigmatic because their spheres of influence in Gandhāra and Taxila seem to overlap (see 2.3). Although an absolute chronology is very difficult to establish for the long reign of Kujula Kadphises, numismatic evidence of increasingly imposing titles in Greek and Kharoṣṭhī coin legends and of adaptation and transformation of coin images used by Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, and Indo-Parthian predecessors reflects the growth of Kuṣāṇa hegemony in the northwest following the period of Gondophares around 50 CE.

Recent discoveries of Kharoṣṭhī and Bactrian inscriptions also provide important evidence of the role of Kujula Kadphises in establishing the Kuṣāṇa empire. A long Kharoṣṭhī inscription of Senavarman, the king of Oḍi, refers to a high official named Sadaṣkaṇa as *Devaputra* and the son of “the Great King, King over Kings” Kujula Kadphises (*maharaja-rayatiraya kuyula-kataphsa-putro sadaṣkaṇo devaputro*, l.8).<sup>72</sup> Among the other officials who are honored with Sadaṣkaṇa and the relatives of Senavarman is a “royal kinsman” named Suhasoma, whose name also appears as the husband of Vāsavadattā in a Kharoṣṭhī inscription on British Library pot A (Salomon 1999: 152-153, 191-199). If Suhasoma of the Senavarman

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<sup>71</sup> Allchin 1968: 11-13; Konow 1929: lxxv; Marshall 1951: 1.67, 2.785, 2.792 [chart]



inscription is identical with the husband of Vāsavadattā of the British Library pot A inscription, and if Vāsavadattā is identical with the sister of the Apraca Prince Indravarman mentioned in his Kharoṣṭhī reliquary inscription dated in 6 CE, then this relation between the Apraca-rājas and Oḍi-rājas helps to establish synchronisms between these local dynasties and the Kuṣāṇa lineage, since a son (Sadaṣkaṇa) of Kujula Kadphises was a contemporary of Senavarman and Suhasoma. Epigraphical connections between the Apracas of Bajaur, the Oḍi kings (perhaps localized in Swat), and a son of Kujula Kadphises suggest that these local ruling families on the borderlands of Gandhāra acknowledged Kuṣāṇa authority by the early to mid first century CE.

A Bactrian inscription from Rabatak in northern Afghanistan clarifies the issue of the genealogy of the next three generations of Kuṣāṇa rulers following Kujula Kadphises. This large inscription in Bactrian, a Middle Iranian language written in Greek script, was discovered in 1993 at Rabatak about 40 km east of Haïbak on a hillside known as Kāfir Qal'a,<sup>73</sup> and has been the subject of three long articles by Cribb and Sims-Williams (1995/6: 75-142), Fussman (1998: 571-651) and Mukherjee (1995: 1-105), who disagree about the implications of the inscription for

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<sup>72</sup> Bailey 1980:22; Fussman 1982: 5; Mukherjee 1981: 13; Salomon 1986: 265

<sup>73</sup> Cribb and Sims-Williams 1995/6: 75 give an account of the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the inscription. Ball and Gardin 1982: I, 266, no. 944, Map 84 refer to archaeological studies of pottery and other artifacts from the Kuṣāṇa, Hephthalite and Turk, and Timurid periods at Rabatak. Fussman comments: "Il existait en effet une route antique partant du fond de la plaine de Pul-i-Khumri (création moderne), passant par Surkh Kotal, Rabatak, Haïbak/Samangān, et Tashkurgan/Khulm et arrivant à Bactres . . . la route antique passait à la lisière des terrains cultivables et de la montagne, sur terrain montagnoux ou non irrigable, et les cols étaient gardés à

Kuṣāṇa chronology. While the purpose of the 23 line inscription was to record the establishment of images of an Iranian pantheon of gods in a sanctuary by a local official of the Kuṣāṇa emperor Kaniṣka, Sims-Williams' translation of lines 12-14, "for King Kujula Kadphises (his) great grandfather, and for King Vima Taktu (his) grandfather, and for King Vima Kadphises (his) father, and \*also for himself, King Kanishka" (Cribb and Sims-Williams 1995/6: 80), has been challenged by Mukherjee (1995: 10), who reads the name of Sadaskana (as in the Senavarman Kharoṣṭhī inscription) instead of Vima Taktu, and by Fussman (1998: 604), who maintains that the condition of this critical part of line 13 of the inscription does not permit a clear reading of the name of the ruler between Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises. Fussman (1998: 605-619) also dismisses evidence from a Brāhmī inscription at the base of a colossal statue of a seated Kuṣāṇa emperor found at Māṭ (across the Yamunā River from Mathurā) and from a set of trilingual inscriptions at Dašt-e-Nāwur in Afghanistan which Cribb and Sims-Williams cite to support their reading and interpretation of Vima Taktu's name in the Rabatak inscription. Although the name of the direct successor of Kujula Kadphises is unclear, the Rabatak inscription confirms that Kujula Kadphises was followed by another ruler before Vima Kadphises, the father of Kaniṣka, inherited power. Cribb (1995/6: 99-100) proposes that the intervening "nameless king" (whom he wishes to identify with Vima Taktu based on Sims-Williams' reading of the Rabatak inscription) can be linked with the

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l'êpoque kouchane par de petites forteresses comme la forteresse non fouillée de Surkh Khotal ou celle

‘Soter Megas’ (“Great Saviour”) series of Kuṣāṇa coins, which follow the coin-types of Kujula Kadphises and precede those of Vima Kadphises.<sup>74</sup> Since the successor of Kujula Kadphises was probably connected in some way with ‘Soter Megas’ coins, the widespread distribution of these coins throughout northern Afghanistan, northern Pakistan, and northern India as far east as Benares and Ghazipur (MacDowall 1968: 28) reflects the consolidation and expansion of Kuṣāṇa hegemony during the periods between Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises.

Vima Kadphises, who is clearly specified as the father of Kaniṣka in the Rabatak inscription, is also known primarily through his coins. He introduced the use of gold coinage, perhaps melted down from Roman coins imported to India in exchange for a variety of luxury items (see 4.4). While Roman coins are found in large numbers in southern India and Sri Lanka, their rarity in the northwest may be due to Kuṣāṇa reminting begun during the time of Vima Kadphises. Rosenfield explains the significance of Kuṣāṇa gold coinage:

The use of gold gave to the coins of the Kushans the highest possible value and prestige. It was *prima-facie* proof of the economic power of the throne and a direct

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de Rabatak” (1998: 576).

<sup>74</sup> This numismatic sequence involving a “nameless king” between Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises was earlier proposed by MacDowall (1968), who argued against the interpretation of Soter Megas as a ‘Viceroy’ of the Kuṣāṇas, a view based on the reference in *Hou Han shu* 118.9 to a “general” placed in control of India by Yan Gaozhen, the successor to the first Kuṣāṇa ruler, Qiu Jiuque (Rosenfield 1967: 18). Cribb (1995/6: 102) attempts to identify Yan Gaozhen with Vima Taktu, but this is far from certain, since as Fussman observes, “la lecture attentive de HHS 118.9 permet plusieurs interprétations” (1998: 639). In any case, some connection between the ‘Soter Megas’ coinage and the immediate successor to Kujula Kadphises is very likely, but still does not explain why this Kuṣāṇa ruler remained anonymous in his coin legends (Fussman 1998: 621), with a few possible exceptions proposed by Cribb (Cribb and Sims-Williams: 1995/6: 115-118, types 6-8, figs. 13-15).

product of the great commercial prosperity on which the flowering of the arts in the empire was based. (1967: 19)

The types of coins issued under Vima Kadphises demonstrate a progression towards more grandiloquent titles in coin legends and more elaborate iconography in coin images than those of the types issued by Kujula Kadphises and his predecessor. For example, on the obverse of coins showing Vima Kadphises in a standing pose making an offering at a small altar,<sup>75</sup> Vima Kadphises has the title “King of Kings” and “Soter Megas” in the Greek legends (BACILEUS BAXIAEΩN XΩTHP MEΓAC OOHMO KADΦICHC), and “Great King, King of Kings, Lord (King) of All the World, Great Lord (King), Saviour” in Kharoṣṭhī (*maharajasa rajadirajasa sarvaloga-iśvarasa mahiśvarasa Vima Kaṭhphiśasa tradara*) on the reverse, which depict Śiva standing in front of his bull, Nandin.<sup>76</sup> Vima Kadphises’ coins are very distinctive, portraying him in all his glory as a large man with a huge nose and a wart on one cheek (Rosenfield 1967: 22). Supposed epigraphic attestations of the name of Vima Kadphises in a Brāhmī inscription from Mathurā and in Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions

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<sup>75</sup> The pose, costume, and other attributes of such coin portraits of Vima Kadphises are very similar to features of statues of Kuṣāṇa emperors at Mathurā and Surkh Kotal (Rosenfield 1967: 26, 144ff., Figs. 2-3, 119-120). Royal figures on Kuṣāṇa coins may have been the models for certain illustrations in rock drawings from northern Pakistan: compare the human figure in Area I.D at Hunza-Haldeikish which Dani 1985: 9 attempts to identify with Vima Kadphises based on an illegible Kharoṣṭhī inscription; also compare human figures standing in similar poses at Shatial 17:40, 34:161, and 14:3 analyzed by König in Fussman and König [MANP 2] 1997: 9-10, pl. 1. Another petroglyph of this type of standing figure is found at Khalatse, between Kashmir and Ladakh on the Indus River (Orofino 1990: 196, Fig. 33; Tucci 1958: 294, Fig. 8).

<sup>76</sup> Errington and Cribb 1992: 85, no. 88; Rosenfield 1967: 25, Type VII, coin 29

from Taxila, Khalatse (between Kashmir and Ladakh), and northern Pakistan are problematic, and should not be accepted as definitely proven.<sup>77</sup>

The Kuṣāṇa empire reached its greatest extent during the reign of the emperor Kaniṣka, whose legacy as a powerful *cakravartin* is preserved in inscriptions, textual traditions, archaeological remains, and coins, as well as in the era initiated by him and continued by his successors. According to the Rabatak Bactrian inscription, set up by an official *karalrang* named Shafar on the orders of Kaniṣka, the Kuṣāṇa realm at the time extended to the cities of Sāketa (*Zagedo*), Kauśāmbī (*Kōzambo*), Pāṭaliputra (*Palabotro*), and Śrī-Campā (*Ziri Tambo*) in the eastern Gangā-Yamunā valley (see 4.2.1.2).<sup>78</sup> In addition to the evidence of this Bactrian inscription, a colossal statue of Kaniṣka at Māt near Mathurā with a Brāhmī label: “Great King, King of Kings, Son of God, Kaniṣka” (*mahārājā rājātirājā devaputro Kāniṣko*) shows that Kaniṣka fulfilled the role of “Universal Emperor” (*cakravartin*).<sup>79</sup> In an article comparing the images of Kuṣāṇa emperors and

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<sup>77</sup> Scholars have attempted to identify the name of Vima Kadphises (or Vima Takto) in the first two lines of a Brāhmī inscription written on the base of a statue of a seated Kuṣāṇa ruler at Māt, but these identifications are not supported by the reading and translation of the inscription by Lüders 1961: 135, §98: 1. *mahārājō rājātirājō devaputro*

2. *Kuṣāṇapu[t]r[o śā]hi [Vema] Ta[kṣu]masya*

A Kharoṣṭhī reliquary inscription on a silver scroll excavated from a votive stūpa on the western side of the Dharmarājikā stūpa at Taxila includes a reference to an unnamed Kuṣāṇa emperor (*maharajasa rajatirajasa devaputrasa Khusanasa arogadakṣinae*) in Azes year 136, corresponding to 78 CE (Konow 1929: 77, no. XXVII, pl. XIV). Konow (1929: 79-81, no. XXIX, pl. XV.2) tentatively identifies the name of Vima Kadphises and a date in year 187 (or 184) in a Kharoṣṭhī inscription at Khalatse, but Sircar (1965b: 134, no. 35), and Fussman (1980: 34-35; 1998:625-626) express doubts about this identification. Fussman comments: “Ce graffiti gravé dans un coin perdu du Ladakh, par on ne sait qui dans on ne sait quel but, est difficilement lisible” (1998: 625).

<sup>78</sup> Cribb and Sims-Williams 1995/6: 78, lines 5-6; Fussman 1998: 599-601; Mukherjee 1995: 6-7

<sup>79</sup> Lüders 1961: 134, §97; Rosenfield 1967: 144, fig. 2

architectural features at Māt with similar images and structures at Surkh Kotāl in Afghanistan, Verardi proposes that the Kuṣāṇas were legitimized as rulers according to Indian conceptions of *cakravartins* despite their foreign origins:

The Kuṣāṇa emperors, as *cakravartins*, became part of Indian history by full right. They belong to it not so much, or only, as conquerors, but rather as legitimate sovereigns. They are the heirs of the Mauryan imperial tradition, of which they propose such a successful *renovatio* that the Gupta emperors will follow in their wake. (1983: 280)

Kaniṣka is credited with the construction of an immense stūpa described by Chinese pilgrims in Peshawar, where archeological remains of its 87 square meter cruciform foundation have been excavated at Shāh-jī-kī-Dherī.<sup>80</sup> Buddhist literary sources portray Kaniṣka as a major patron of Buddhism modeled after the ideal of Aśoka (Rosenfield 1967: 28-39). Buddhist imagery appears on the obverse of some of Kaniṣka's coins,<sup>81</sup> but his coins also depict a wide variety of Iranian, Greek, and Indian gods and goddesses with labels in Bactrian rather than Kharoṣṭhī and Greek, as on the coins of his predecessors (Errington and Cribb 1992: 68). In the opinion of Sircar, "This seems to suggest that the king had a catholic religious policy and represented himself to his subjects, belonging to different religious communities all over his vast empire, as full of respect towards the deities worshipped by them" (1971b: 3). While the evidence from coins and inscriptions at Rabatak and Surkh Kotal suggest that the Kuṣāṇas maintained Iranian religious beliefs and practices,

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<sup>80</sup> See Errington and Cribb 1992: 193-197, Kuwayama 1997, and Rosenfield 1967: 34-36 for assessments of the archaeological evidence of the stūpa. The Kharoṣṭhī inscription on the so-called "Kaniṣka casket" excavated there indicates that it was a perfume box (*gaṃdha-karaṃḍe*) rather than a reliquary, as previously thought (Fussman 1987b: 79).

Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions from northern India and the northwest provide abundant evidence of Buddhist patronage by Kuṣāṇa officials under Kaniṣka.

The critical issue of establishing an absolute date for the beginning of the era founded by Kaniṣka remains unresolved despite the efforts of several generations of scholars to find a consensus, and it is not within the scope of this project to resolve the issue. Since the discovery of the Rabatak inscription, scholarly consensus seems to be shifting away from the traditional date of 78 CE for the beginning of the Kaniṣka era to an early second century date (ca. 100 CE or one or two decades later). As a provisional solution for calculating dates of inscriptions in the Kaniṣka era, I tentatively adopt ca. 100 CE +/- x (where x = 20 years) as an approximate date for the initiation of this era. Bearing in mind Fussman's comment that "L'expérience montre qu'il importe peu à l'historien de l'Inde que Kaniṣka ait commencé à régner en 78, 100 ou 120: cela ne modifie guère notre perception des changements intervenus en Inde du nord aux deux premiers siècles de n.è." (1998: 640), a brief summary of possible dates for the beginning of the Kaniṣka era may help to clarify some of the issues involved.

Theories identifying the Kaniṣka era with the Śaka era beginning in 78 CE "are the most cogent, the simplest, and apparently the most reasonable" (Rosenfield 1967: 254). This theory is based on the hypothesis that the Western Kṣatrapas (sometimes called Śakas) ruling in western India in the first three centuries CE

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<sup>81</sup> Errington and Cribb 1992: 199-201, nos. 197-199; Göbl 1987

inherited the reckoning system from their overlords, the Kuṣāṇas. Sircar points out that “[t]he era used by the Śakas of Western India could hardly be of their own institution” (1965a: 261) because they would have been subordinates of the Kuṣāṇas. The earliest epigraphic records which explicitly connect the era beginning in 78 CE with the Śakas of western India do not occur until the sixth or seventh centuries CE, in the inscriptions of the Cālukyas of Badāmi (ibid., 259). In an article reviewing the Bactrian inscription at Rabatak, Fussman (1998) maintains the position that Kaniṣka began ruling in 78 CE, despite evidence that two Kuṣāṇa rulers (Vima Taktu? and Vima Kadphises) must be placed within the 25 - 30 year time frame between Kujula Kadphises (ruling until at least 50 CE) and Kaniṣka.

If, on the other hand, the Kaniṣka era is separate from the Śaka era, possible dates for the commencement of a later era around 100 CE have been suggested on the basis of numismatic, art historical, and Chinese literary references which present stylistic and chronological conflicts with the date of 78 CE (Narain 1968: 215 ff.). Based primarily on analysis of numismatic evidence of Kuṣāṇa coins and coins of their contemporaries in the northwest, western India, and Khotan, as well as the testimony of the Rabatak inscription and reports of Kuṣāṇa involvement in eastern Central Asia according to Chinese historical annals, Cribb advocates a date for the beginning of the Kaniṣka era between 100 -120 CE.<sup>82</sup> However, Fussman’s (1998)

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<sup>82</sup> Errington and Cribb 1992: 17-18; Cribb and Sims-Williams 1995/6: 99-106; Cribb 2000



criticisms of Cribb's suggested chronologies demonstrate that these materials are open to various interpretations and do not allow precise dates to be determined.

Harry Falk (forthcoming) posits a precise date of 127 CE for the beginning of the era initiated by Kaniṣka based on a reference to the Kuṣāṇa and Śaka eras in the *Yavanaajātaka*, and astronomical treatise written by Sphujidhvaja in 269/70 CE (Pingree 1978). A verse in the last chapter (79.15) distinguishes between “the number of years that have passed of the Koṣāṇas” (*koṣāṇagatābdasamkhyā*) and the “the time of the Śakas (i.e., the year in the Śaka era)” (*kālaṃ śakānām*) (Pingree 1978: 2.187). The verse seems to indicate that 149 years separate the two eras,<sup>83</sup> which would result in a very late date for the beginning of the “Koṣāṇa” era corresponding to 227 CE, so Falk subtracts 100 years to reach 127 CE. Since this passage of the text is apparently corrupt and requires critical emendations to clarify the meaning, its utility as evidence for determining the initial date of the Kaniṣka era is not satisfactory.

Ghirshman calculates that the Kaniṣka era began in 143/4 CE based on the destruction Begram by Shāpur I during the reign of the Kuṣāṇa ruler Vāsudeva in the third century CE (1946: 99ff.; 1957). However, his hypotheses concerning the stratification of this site are criticized by Narain (1968: 211-13, 228-31) and other scholars who participated in the Conference on the Date of Kaniṣka in 1960 (Basham 1968). Extending the date for the beginning of the Kaniṣka beyond the early second century CE is problematic because Kujula Kadphises can be securely placed in the

chronological context of the the early to mid first century CE. Furthermore, if Kaniṣka was ruling in the middle of the second century CE, his reign would have overlapped with that of the Western Kṣatrapa ruler Rudradāman, whose Sanskrit inscription at Junāgaḍh dated in 150 CE records his extensive domain without mentioning the Kuṣāṇas.<sup>84</sup>

Much later dates for the beginning of the Kaniṣka era in the third century have been proposed by Göbl (232 CE) and Zeymal (278 CE) strictly on numismatic grounds.<sup>85</sup> However, such theories have not been widely accepted because dates in the third century for Kaniṣka would necessitate that his predecessors Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises reigned for over 130 years (Alram 1999: 46). The era initiated in 232 CE which is now widely attested in Bactrian documents (Sims-Williams 1999) was instead probably associated with Sasanian conquests in the northwest when Kuṣāṇa power had significantly declined. Dates for Kaniṣka in the third century should also be dismissed because the beginning of the Gupta era in 319/320 CE would not allow enough time for his successors to rule.

A theory of "omitted hundreds" was suggested by Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 235-262; 1986: 1-9) based on stylistic analysis of inscribed sculptures from Mathurā dated in the Kaniṣka era. Fussman (1987b: 72, fn. 24) agrees that the theory of

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<sup>83</sup> It is not clear that 149 years represents a chronological difference between the two separate eras, since the immediate context of verse 79.14 is a calculation for determining the beginning of a *yuga* of 165 years, when the sun and moon enter Aries at sunrise (Pingree 1978: 2.407-9).

<sup>84</sup> Kielhorn 1905-6: 36-49; Sircar 1965b: 178-80, no. 67

<sup>85</sup> Zwalf (1996: 357-8, fn. 3) [Vol. 1, Appendix 1: A note on ancient eras] refers to a broad range of dates for the inception of the Kaniṣka era, up to 278 CE.

omitted hundreds can be applied to sculptures from Mathurā, but strongly disagrees that hundreds were omitted in dates on inscribed Gandhāran sculptures, since Lohuizen-de Leeuw's arguments based on Kharoṣṭhī paleography and a Sanskritizing trend in Gāndhārī are flawed. A date written in words (*saṃbatsara satapamiśa* “year fifty-seven”) and in numerals ( $1 - 100 - 20 - 20 - 10 - 4 - 1 - 1 - 1 = 157$ ) in a Kharoṣṭhī reliquary inscription of the nun Utaraya supplies a possible precedent for “omitted hundreds,” although this date probably belongs to the Azes/Vikrama era of 57/8 BCE (resulting in a date corresponding to approximately 100 CE) rather than the Kaniṣka era (Salomon 1995: 136).

Kharoṣṭhī graffiti inscriptions from Hunza-Haldeikish (3.2.1), Alam Bridge (3.2.2) and Oshibat (3.2.5) contain about twenty dates in an unspecified era ranging from years 5 to 91, but determining the era or eras to which these dates belong remains difficult. These dates probably do not belong to the Azes/Vikrama Saṃvat era beginning in 57/8 BCE, which is probably too early in view of paleographical features.<sup>86</sup> The Śaka era beginning in 8 CE yields dates between 83 and 175 CE, which is certainly possible as a chronological range for the Kharoṣṭhī graffiti. A separate Kaniṣka era beginning ca. 100-120 would put these dated Kharoṣṭhī graffiti in the second to third centuries CE. Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions from northern Pakistan may indicate that a system of omitted hundreds used, since most of the attested dates

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<sup>86</sup> One such palaeographical consideration is the open shape of the ‘head’ of *sa* or *saṃ* (an abbreviation for Sanskrit *saṃvatsare*) which precedes many of these numerical dates. This shape of *sa* does not appear in earlier stages of Kharoṣṭhī in the first century BCE. It should be noted that the

are either very low or very high numbers. None of the names of Kuṣāṇa emperors or officials noticed by Dani (1985: 19-21; 1987: 34-6; 1989: 126-7) are actually legible at Hunza-Haldeikish, so the actual presence of these Kuṣāṇas in the Northern Areas of Pakistan remains conjectural.

Based on the genealogy of early Kuṣāṇa rulers in the Rabatak inscription and dated Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī inscriptions of Kaniṣka and his successors, a rough chronology of Kuṣāṇa rulers can be proposed:<sup>87</sup>

Table 2.4: Kuṣāṇa Rulers and Dates

<b>Kuṣāṇa Rulers:</b>	<b>Kaniṣka era dates</b>	<b>CE</b>
Kujula Kadphises	NA	early - mid 1 <sup>st</sup> century
“Nameless King” (Vima Taktu?)	NA	mid - late 1 <sup>st</sup> century
Vima Kadphises	NA	late 1 <sup>st</sup> century
Kaniṣka	1 - 23	ca. 100 - 125
Huviṣka	28 - 60	ca. 126 - 164
Vāsudeva	64/7 - 98	ca. 164 - 198
Kaniṣka II	[1]05 - [1]17	ca. 200 - 220
Vāsiṣka	[1]24 - [1]28	ca. 220 - 230
Kaniṣka III	[1]41	ca. 240
Later Kuṣāṇas		ca. 250 - ca. 300

The Kuṣāṇas exerted considerable influence on oases in the Tarim Basin such as Khotan and Kashgar, which historically were on the periphery of Chinese control.

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semi-closed shape of *sa* which does belong to the early to mid first century CE is found in Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions from Chilas II, which Fussman (1989b) dates between 50 BCE and 50 CE.

<sup>87</sup> In this chart based on figures for Kaniṣka era dates (mostly from Mathurā sculptures) in Cribb 1999: 183, 188; 2000: 51; Rosenfield 1967: 28, 265-73 (Appendix III) and Sircar 1965a: 261, CE equivalents are calculated according to the theory that ca. 100 CE + /- x (=20 years) was the beginning of the era. Cribb’s genealogy and chronology for Kaniṣka’s successors is followed, although Vāsiṣka (Vajheṣka) may have succeeded Kaniṣka I rather than Kaniṣka II. If that is in fact the case, the Ara Kharoṣṭhī inscription of Kaniṣka, son of Vajheṣka, dated in year 41 would overlap with the dated inscriptions of Huviṣka (Rosenfield 1967: 57-8).

According to the *Hou Han shu*, between 87-91 CE a Kuṣāṇa expedition of 70,000 soldiers crossed the Pamirs to Kashgar because a marriage alliance proposed by a Kuṣāṇa envoy sent to China was refused (Ghirshman 1946: 129-31; Hitch 1988: 182-3). In another episode which occurred between 114-119 CE, the Kuṣāṇas installed their candidate as the ruler of Kashgar after he returned from exiled across the Pamirs (Brough 1965: 589). These expeditions could have passed through northern Pakistan to reach Kashgar. Historical annals of the Wei and other Chinese dynasties, such as the *Sangao zhi*, *Wei lüe* and *Bei shi*, also contain references to Chinese relations with the Yuezhi and other rulers in the northwest (Zürcher 1968: 371-374). Sino-Kharoṣṭhī coins from Khotan issued in the first and second century CE and the coins of Vima Kadphises and Kaniṣka which are also found there provide numismatic support for Kuṣāṇa influence across the Karakorum (Hitch 1988: 185-6; Cribb 1985: 137-146). However, it is not likely that the Kuṣāṇas directly controlled these areas of eastern Central Asia.

Commercial exchanges between India and Central Asia during the period of the Kuṣāṇas facilitated the spread of Buddhism (5.1). Donations of reliquary stūpas, monasteries, shrines, and statues are well attested in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions from Sarnath to Wardak in central Afghanistan. While the Kuṣāṇas patronized all religions within their territories, it was under their aegis that Buddhism initially spread from Gandhāra and Kashmir via the mountains of northern Pakistan and the silk routes of the Tarim Basin to China (see 5.3).

### 2.5. Kidāra and Hephthalite Presence in Northern Pakistan

Following the decline of the Kuṣāṇas in the northwest due to Sasanian advances in the third century, many gaps remain to be filled in regional history between the fourth and sixth centuries. Since centralized control by the the Kuṣāṇas or Sasanians was not very strong, local and regional rulers known as the Kidāra Kuṣāṇas assumed power in regions of modern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan in the late fourth and fifth centuries. According to chapter 97.11b of the *Bei shi* (“History of the Northern Dynasties”) and chapter 102,8b of the *Wei shu* (“History of the Wei”), which were based on a report sent from the Western Regions in 437 CE, the Kidāras migrated to northern India after gaining control of the five kingdoms north of Gandhāra:

The king of Da Yuezhi called Jiduoluo (Kidāra), brave and fierce, eventually dispatched his troops southward and invaded North India (present-day Pakistan), crossing the great mountains to subjugate the five kingdoms which were located to the north of Gandhāra. (Kuwayama 1992: 19)<sup>88</sup>

According to Kuwayama (*ibid.*), the kingdoms to the north of Gandhāra included Yarkand, Tashkurgan, Wakhan, and Chitral, which are located in areas of the southern Tarim Basin, northeastern Afghanistan, and northwestern Pakistan which border the Northern Areas.

The next major group of people to move through northern Pakistan in the fifth and sixth centuries CE was the Hephthalites, who sometimes are identified with

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<sup>88</sup> See translation of the same passage by Zürcher 1968: 373 and comments by Zeimal 1996: 122.

the Hūṇas in Indian sources and the Xiongnu in Chinese sources.<sup>89</sup> Song Yun, an official Wei envoy, and Huisheng visited the court of the Hephthalite (*Heda*) ruler in eastern Afghanistan in 519 CE and continued traveling to Swat and Gandhāra in 520 CE (1.4.2). While the ruler of Swat was a diligent Buddhist vegetarian, the

Hephthalite subordinate in charge of Gandhāra is described in less flattering terms:

The nature of the king is violent and cruel, very often conducting massacres. He does not believe in the Buddhist faith, but well worships their [*sic*] own heathen gods. As all the inhabitants in the country are Brahmans who respect Buddhism by much reading the sutras, so it is deeply against their wishes that they suddenly have such a king. Relying on his bravery the king has been fighting against Jibin (Kashmir) for the control of the territory for three years. (Kuwayama 1992: 4)<sup>90</sup>

Although Marshall (1951: 1.76-7) and other historians attribute the destruction of Buddhist monastic sites in Swat and Taxila to the Hephthalites, Kuwayama emphasizes that “no statement is made in any paragraph proving that the Hephthalite king killed Buddhist monks or destroyed Buddhism in Gandhāra” (1992: 4). In fact, the Kura stone inscription from the Salt Range records a donation to a Mahīśāsaka Buddhist monastery in the name of the Hephthalite ruler Toramāṇa (Sircar 1965b: 420-24). Although Mihirakula, the son of Toramāṇa who ruled Kashmir in the sixth century, is described in the *Rājataranṅinī* (i.291) as a “royal *Vetāla* (vampire) day and night surrounded by thousands of murdered human beings” (Stein 1900: 1.43), a major Buddhist shrine at Harwan was built during this period of Hephthalite rule (Paul 1986: 39 ff.). Numerous Sogdian and Bactrian inscriptions in the Upper Indus

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<sup>89</sup> Zeimal 1996: 123 observes that Indian sources refer to both Kidāras and Hephthalites as Hūṇas and Litvinsky (1996: 135-6) points out that Chinese sources are not very clear about the origins of the Hephthalites.

valley, particularly at Shatial (3.2.6), indicate that long-distance commerce flourished while the Kidāras and Hephthalites were in control of regions adjoining the Northern Areas.<sup>91</sup> As Hephthalite control of the Oxus valley and northwestern regions of the Indian subcontinent diminished in the late sixth century, numerous local powers emerged in northern Pakistan and Afghanistan (Kuwayama 1991: 113).

## 2.6. The Paṭola Śāhi Dynasty of Northern Pakistan

The local dynasty of the Paṭola Shāhis ruled northern Pakistan from the seventh to early eighth centuries CE. Stone inscriptions, inscribed bronze sculptures, and the colophons of Buddhist manuscripts found near Gilgit furnish evidence that this area was the cultural and administrative center of northern Pakistan and provide reliable sources for reconstructing the chronology and genealogy of this important family. A Sanskrit inscription written in seven lines of Proto-Śārada script dated in year 47 of the Laukika era, corresponding to 671/2 CE, during the reign of a Paṭola Śāhi ruler named Navasurendrāditya-nandin is located has been found at Hātun in the Ishkoman valley on the northern bank of the Gilgit River (Chakravarti 1953: 226-231; Fussman 1993a: 4-19; Stein 1944: 5-14). The inscription records the excavation of an irrigation canal and the founding of a town by Makara Siṃgha, an official under the Paṭola Śāhis who held the titles of “Great Treasurer” (*mahāgaṃjapati*), “Supreme Minister” (*mahāmattyavara*), “Great Chief of the Feudatories” (*mahāsādha[n]tādhipati*), and “Military Commander of Gilgit” (*Giligittā-*

<sup>90</sup> Corresponding translations by Beal 1884: c, Chavannes 1903, Jenner 1981: 265.

<sup>91</sup> “Hun” (Sogdian *xwn*) is well attested as a component of names in at least 15 Sogdian inscriptions from the Upper Indus (Sims-Williams 1989-92: 2.80 [glossary]).



*sarāṃgha*).<sup>92</sup> Another damaged Sanskrit inscription at Dainyor, near the confluence of the Gilgit and Hunza rivers, contains the name of a later Paṭola Śāhi ruler, Jayamaṅgalavikramāditya-nandin and a date in year 6 of the next century of the Laukika era corresponding to 730/1 CE, and may have recorded a land grant (Hinüber 1986-7: 228-9). Graffiti inscriptions with names of people associated with the Paṭolas are located at Alam Bridge (see 3.2.2), Hodar (68:1), and Dadam Das (37:1, 57:1) (Hinüber 1999: 92; 1989a: 64-65, no. 64, pl. 131). Thus, the epigraphic evidence strongly suggests that the Paṭola Śāhis exerted considerable influence in the Gilgit valley and surrounding areas of northern Pakistan in the seventh century.

Additional inscriptions of the Paṭola Śāhis with dates in the Laukika era corresponding to the early eighth century CE are written on pedestals of three bronze sculptures (also see 5.2.5). The largest of these sculptures which has recently been found in Tibet in the Jhokang Palace in Lhasa was a “religious offering” of the Paṭola (Palola) Śāhi ruler Jayamaṅgalavikramāditya-nandin along with Queen Utpalakeśārī, princesses, and other female donors in 706/7 CE (year 82 of the Laukika era).<sup>93</sup> The following Paṭola Śāhi ruler Nandivikramāditya-nandin is portrayed as a donor in an inscribed bronze Buddhist sculpture dated 714/5 CE (year 90 of the Laukika era).<sup>94</sup> Another bronze sculpture was a gift of the princess Devaśrī (who is also named in the inscription in 706/7 CE) and her husband, the treasurer Saṃkarasena dated in the

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<sup>92</sup> Although *Mahāsāmantādhipati* is expected instead of *mahāsādha[n]tādhipati*, Fussman 1993a: 15 comments that the use of the Iranian title *sarāṃgha* (Persian *sarhangal*/ Middle Iranian *srhng* “hero”) indicated that local adoption of non-Indian titles is “not impossible.” These titles contain the earliest reference to the toponym of Gilgit (*Giligittā*) and Makara Siṃgha is described as Kāñjuti (*Kaṇḍiṭya*), an ethnonym still applied to Burushos (speakers of Burushaski, see 1.3.3), as recognized by Stein 1944: 9 and Fussman 1993a: 14, n. 6.

<sup>93</sup> The reading of the four-line Śāraḍa inscription by Hinüber is published in Henss 1996: 61; also see comments by Hinüber 1999: 92, fn. 11, who states “Jayamaṅgalavikramādityanandi I von dem Verfasser der Dainyor-Inschrift getrennt werden muß.”

<sup>94</sup> Fussman 1993a: 40-43, pl. 30; Hinüber 1986-7: 224; Paul 1986: 202-218

same year as the gift of Nandivikramāditya-nandin (year 90 = 714/5 CE).<sup>95</sup> It is possible that the Paṭola Śāhis and members of their court donated other bronze images with inscriptions which have not yet been properly recognized.

Colophons of Buddhist manuscripts found near Gilgit (see 1.4.1) record the names of three early Paṭola Śāhi rulers, Surendravikramāditya-nandin, Vikramāditya-nandin, and Vajrāditya-nandin, along with the names of members of their family and court (Hinüber 1980: 49 ff.; 1986/7: 222-227). A date in year three (*saṃvatsare tṛtīye 3*) of an unspecified era in a colophon of a manuscript of the *Samghāṭa-sūtra* written in Proto-Śārada (directly copied from a prototype written in Brāhmī) would correspond to 627/8 CE if the reckoning system in question can be identified with same century of the Laukika era as the Proto-Śārada inscription of year 47 (671/2 CE) executed during the reign of Navasurendravikramāditya-nandin.<sup>96</sup> The transition between late Brāhmī and Proto-Śārada which took place in the middle of the seventh century establishes a fixed point for the dating of the Gilgit manuscripts and for the Paṭola Śāhi dynasty. Although an absolute chronology can not be established for the other colophons, Hinüber (1986/7: 223) proposes that the introduction of the Proto-Śārada script around 630 CE furnishes a *terminus ante quem* for these rulers, since their names appear in colophons of manuscripts written in the so-called Round Brāhmī script, which was replaced by Proto-Śārada.<sup>97</sup> Brāhmī manuscripts with the names of three early Paṭola Shāhi rulers therefore belong to the period before ca. 600-

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<sup>95</sup> Fussman 1993a: 43-7, pl. 31; Hinüber 1983a: 61; Paul 1986: 219-243

<sup>96</sup> Shastri 1939: 5; Hinüber 1979: 61; 1980: 69-72; 1986/7: 223-225. The name of śrī Navasurendra, an abbreviated form of Navasurendrādityanandin, is also written in a version of the *Vimaloṣṇīṣa-dhāraṇī* found by Shastri at Naupūr (Shastri 1939: 8-9; Hinüber 1981: 167; Schopen 1985: 141-145).

<sup>97</sup> Also see Sander 1989: 111 and Fussman 1993a: 27 for an illustration of changes in writing the character for *ya* in Round Brāhmī and Proto-Śārada between ca. 600 -671. Sander remarks, “The suggestion made by O. von Hinüber that the Proto-Śārada script may have been introduced by an official act . . . cannot be followed without hesitation” (1989: 110).

630 CE. Based on the names of royal donors in colophons, royal inscriptions, and inscribed bronze images, the genealogy of the Paṭola Śāhi rulers can be reconstructed as follows:<sup>98</sup>

Table 2.6: Genealogy and Chronology of the Paṭola Śāhi Dynasty

<b>Ruler:</b>	<b>Date:</b> (Laukika year in parentheses)
Vajrāditya-nandin	ca. 600
Vikramāditya-nandin	before ca. 630
Surendravikramāditya-nandin	ca. 630
Navasurendrāditya-nandin	671/2 (year 47)
Jayamaṅgalavikramāditya-nandin (I)	706/7 (year 82)
Nandivikramāditya-nandin	714/5 (year 90)
Surendrāditya	ca. 720-725
Jayamaṅgalavikramāditya-nandin (I)	730/31 (year 6)

## 2.7. Tibetan and Chinese Conflicts in Northern Pakistan

Sometime around the beginning of the eighth century, the realm of the Paṭola Śāhis was divided into “Little Bolor” around Gilgit and “Great Bolor” in Baltistan.

Huizhao, a Korean monk who traveled from Kashmir to Bolor, relates that the Greater Bolor was controlled by Tibetans and Lesser Bolor was under Chinese dominion before 727 CE (Yang et al. 1980: 47-8). According to his account:

Greater Bolor was originally the place where the king of Lesser Bolor resided. It was because the Tibetans have come that he fled and shifted his residence to Lesser Bolor. The chiefs and common people remained and did not come [with the king]. (Yang, et al. 1980: 48)

After Little Bolor (presumably still controlled by the Paṭola Śāhis) made an alliance with China in 717 CE to deter growing Tibetan influence in the Karakorum and Pamir mountains, Tibetan forces occupied the region in 722 and 737 (Beckwith 1987: 95-116; Jettmar 1993: 84). In 747 CE a Chinese expedition of 10,000 men led by the

<sup>98</sup> Adapted from Hinüber 1999: 92-3

Korean general Gao Xianzhi crossed the Pamirs and defeated a Tibetan garrison in Wakhan (Beckwith 1987: 131 ff.; Stein 1922). The Chinese force reached Gilgit through the Yasin valley and subsequently conquered the capital of Baltistan (Great Bolor) located at present-day Katsura near Skardu in 753 (Stein 1922: 112ff.; Jettmar 1993: 84-91). The intense long-distance conflict, which must have required a huge investment in human and material resources, between Tibet and China over control of this region demonstrates its strategic value in the middle of the eighth century, when the Chinese were also struggling against Arab forces on their western frontiers.

Historical annals of the Tang period, particularly chapter 221 of the *Tang shu*, provide many more details about the geography and political history of Greater and Lesser Bolor, Udyāna, and Kashmir, especially in regard to the relations of these border countries with the Tang court (Chavannes 1903a: 149-154, 128-129, 166-168, 130-132). This increase in Chinese knowledge of northern Pakistan was partly the result of military campaigns in 747-750 CE (Chavannes 1903a: 152-4, fn.1a-n; Stein 1922; Beckwith 1987: 130 ff.). References to regions which are now located in or adjacent to northern Pakistan indicate the importance of controlling routes through the mountains in the struggle over Central Asia between the Chinese, Tibetans, Turks, Arabs, and Indians in the eighth century CE. Chinese and Tibetan inscriptions (3.1.1.4-5) in the Northern Areas of Pakistan preserve traces of the short-lived presence of these foreign forces which by vying for domination here lost more important battles elsewhere (i.e., the Chinese defeat at Talas in 751).

## 2.8. Northern Pakistan in the 9<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> centuries

The long period between the downfall of Tibetan and Chinese intervention and British colonial involvement is outside the chronological scope of this study.<sup>99</sup> The most serious obstacle to investigating the history of the Northern Areas after the eighth century is a paucity of reliable sources. Some literary sources from the tenth century and later have been briefly identified in the first chapter (1.4.4-5), including the Śaka itinerary, works by Al-bīrūnī and the *Rājataranṅiṇī*. Although Al-Bīrūnī describes the inhabitants of Bolor and Shamīlān as “Turkish tribes who are called *Bhattavaryān*” (Sachau 1888: 1.207), he probably accepted this information at face-value from his Brahman informants, who rarely distinguished between Tibetans, Daradas, Muslims, and other outsiders, but regarded them all as *mlecchas* (“barbarians”) and *Turuṣkas* (likely to be the term used by Al-Bīrūnī’s informants). Bolor, formerly the realm of the Paṭola Shāhis of Gilgit, probably merged with the Daradas of Shamil to harass the borders of Kashmir, which is reflected in Al-Bīrūnī statement that “Kashmir suffers much from their inroads” (ibid.). In the *Rājataranṅiṇī*, exiles from Kashmir flee to the country of the Daradas (vii. 911-913; vii.1130; viii.2702-2714), and Daradas frequently cross the mountains assist usurpers (vii.167-176, vii.1170-1197, viii.2519, viii.2764-2775).<sup>100</sup> These struggles probably reflect the difficulties encountered by the rulers of Kashmir in maintaining control

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<sup>99</sup> See Dani 1989: 158-241 for a summary of local dynastic histories of various ruling families of the Northern Areas of Pakistan. Jettmar 1993: 98 ff. attempts to identify the “successors” of the Paṭola Shāhis. Also see Jettmar 1980a.

<sup>100</sup> As Jettmar (1993: 102, 104) notes, most of the references to raids by *Daradas* take place during the tenth to twelfth centuries, but this may relate to Kalhaṇa’s familiarity with relations between *Daradas* and Kashmir in times closer to the period of his own life. Also see Tucci 1977: 74.

over mountainous borders and the efforts by the Daradas to interfere in the affairs of their more powerful and prosperous rivals whenever opportunities arose. Such antagonistic relations as depicted in the *Rājataranṅinī* certainly do not provide any evidence of the subjugation of the Darada country by the rulers of the Kashmir valley.

### 2.9. Northern Pakistan in the 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> centuries

Local ruling dynasties, Dogra mahārājas, and British political agents vied for control of Gilgit throughout the 1800s. As a result of assistance rendered to the British in the Anglo-Sikh war, the Dogrā Mahārāja of Jammu (Gulab Singh) was awarded Kashmir along with "the hilly or mountainous country, with its dependencies, situated eastward of the river Indus and westward of the river Ravi" according to the Treaty of Amritsar in 1846. Although, as Drew remarks, this territory "can not be made to include Gilgit, which indeed is on the north of the Indus" (1875: 439), the Dogrās assumed control of the Sikh garrison in Gilgit, but they were expelled in 1852 by local forces (Drew 1875: 441-3; Dani 1989: 254-5). The Dogrā mahārāja Ranbhir Singh (busy with suppression of the Sepoy rebellion in 1857) did not reconquer Gilgit until 1860, but violent conflicts with Yasin, Darel and Hunza throughout the 1860s created a legacy of vicious repression by the Dogrās (Dani 1989: 255-260).

In an effort to deter the perceived threat of Russian influence in the Pamir mountains of Central Asia and to prevent the very slim possibility of an invasion through mountain passes into India, the British government of India became involved in the frontier policy of the Dogrās with the "Madhopur Settlement" (ibid., 260). British policy implied two alternatives: "the first was the direct annexation by the

British Government of the tribal territories, and the second was to bring these territories under the control of their feudatory, i.e. the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir” (ibid., 261). After Biddulph was posted to Gilgit as the British political agent between 1877-1881, in 1889 Algernon Durand was appointed to the empty post with considerably more military power and support. The British expanded their control of the northern frontier area through military campaigns against Hunza and Nager in 1891, Chilas in 1892, and Chitral in 1895. Through this policy of aggressive intervention in the political affairs of Gilgit and the surrounding region, artificial boundaries such as the "Durand line" were created as "buffers" between colonial possessions in India and Russian spheres of influence in Central Asia.

Gilgit remained the major center for control and administration in the twentieth century of the present Northern Areas of Pakistan. Although the status of Hunza, Nager, Chilas, Yasin and other regions within the Gilgit Agency remained uncertain (Dani 1989: 287), Gilgit was jointly administered as a *Wazarat* in which internal affairs were nominally controlled by officers (*wazirs*) of the Mahārāja of Jammu and Kashmir, and external affairs were supervised by British political agents. The British government of India assumed full control of the administration of the Gilgit *Wazarat* (excluding territories on the left bank of the Indus River such as Astore) by signing a lease agreement with the Mahārāja of Jammu and Kashmir in 1935 for 60 years.<sup>101</sup>

After independence and partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, Hari Singh, the Mahārāja of Jammu and Kashmir, eventually decided to accede to India even though three-fourths of his subjects were Muslims (Kreutzmann 1995a: 216). As a result of

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<sup>101</sup> In the text of the lease (Dani 1989: 299) mining rights, ceremonial honors and the dominion of the Mahārāja of Jammu and Kashmir are recognized, but civil and military administration are transferred to the British.

this dubious accession by a ruler whose authority over Gilgit and the neighboring regions was highly uncertain, the Gilgit Scouts, a military force composed of exclusively Muslim local recruits commanded by British officers, declared independence from Kashmir and allegiance to Pakistan. In subsequent military campaigns against Kashmiri and Indian forces, the Gilgit Scouts were able to advance through Baltistan and other territories which now comprise the Northern Areas of Pakistan (Dani 1989: 326-408). Despite United Nations negotiations and resolutions for a plebiscite and recurrent border clashes between India and Pakistan, the constitutional status of this region which is *de facto* a part of Pakistan remains ambiguous. India claims that the Northern Areas legally belong to the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Ostensibly due to the dispute with India over the status of Kashmir, the Northern Areas are governed directly from Islamabad by a separate federal ministry and its residents are denied the right to vote in elections to the National Assembly. As Kreuzmann observes, "These singular arrangements derive their origins from colonial roots and were meant for the relief of an external administration or for indirect rule" (1995a: 219). Just as it was in British imperial interests to preserve the Gilgit Agency as a "buffer" between India and the Russian sphere of influence in Central Asia, so today it is in the national strategic interests of Pakistan to maintain the *status quo* by exerting centralized control over Gilgit and the Northern Areas. A secure northern border region gives Pakistan a military advantage over India vis-a-vis Kashmir, provides a direct overland link via the KKH with China - its most powerful regional ally, and could supply access to potentially important routes for trans-regional trade with the former Soviet Central Asian republics of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Gilgit, the administrative headquarters for the five



districts of the Northern Areas of Pakistan and the main center for commerce, communication and transportation (with direct connections to Islamabad by air and by the KKH), continues to play a very important role in inter-regional politics and economics, which have had a significant impact.