

Symbols and Other Details of Five Coins of the Erich Hoard (Fig. 3)

COIN NO.	TYPE	WEIGHT (gm.)	SYMBOL 'A'				SYMBOL 'B'				COIN IMAGE (OBVERSE)
			1	2	3	4	2	3	4		
1	I	1.64									
2	I	1.57									
3	II	1.64									
4	III	1.66									
5	IV	1.68									

AN IMPORTANT NEW COPPER COIN OF GADAHARA

By Pankaj Tandon¹⁰⁶



In ONS 172, Haroon Tareen published a small copper coin from the so-called Kashmir Smast hoard which he identified as a combination of Kushano-Sasanian and Kushan.¹⁰⁷ He provided a simple description, but did not otherwise explore the importance of the coin, nor was he able to read any extant legend. Some months previously, I had acquired within the

space of four days (from sources 6,000 miles apart!) two specimens of this same coin type, which I recognised as a hitherto unpublished and potentially important copper coin of the late Kushan or Kidarite period. Subsequently, I have acquired a third

specimen of the type. Joe Cribb has been working on these coins and has informed me that mine are probably the best specimens known. As the coin is an important type, I thought I should publish my specimens for the benefit of researchers. I have added a fourth specimen by courtesy of Tom Mallon-McCorgray.

The coin has on its obverse a king's bust right with turreted ramshorn crown. The reverse of the coin shows the goddess of plenty, normally identified in this time and place as Ardochsho, seated with cornucopia in her left arm and, presumably, a diadem or wreath in the right hand. Normally, Ardochsho is depicted seated on a throne, but on this coin the goddess is seated not on a throne but on an animal. We would expect the animal to be a lion, but there is a possibility that it is a bull!¹⁰⁸ The coin bears another, and even greater, surprise: a Brahmi legend that reads *Gada* in the right field and *hara* in the left field. To my knowledge, this is the first copper coin type known to bear the legend *Gadahara*, thereby linking it to the gold coins bearing the same legend.¹⁰⁹ On two of the specimens, we also see the Brahmi letter *ta* (or *tam*) in

¹⁰⁶ I wish to thank Joe Cribb and Tom Mallon for helpful exchanges on this coin type.

¹⁰⁷ See Haroon Tareen: "Late 4th Century AD Copper Coins of Kashmir – Smast Hoard," ONS Newsletter 173 (Autumn 2002), p.18, the first coin listed.

¹⁰⁸ Joe Cribb was the first to point out to me that Ardochsho was seated not on a throne, but on what appeared to him as a lion. Haroon Tareen identified the animal as a bull, and that is a possibility. However, a close examination of the coins, especially coin 4 which shows the animal's face, suggests that the animal is in fact a lion.

¹⁰⁹ Robert Göbl: *Münzprägung des Kusānreiches*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984, coins 600-611.

the left reverse field. This was probably a “monogram” to represent a mint or a mint master.

I will first present the coins and their details, and then will follow a discussion of the importance of this new type. Photos of four specimens of the coin type are presented, of which the first three are from my personal collection and the fourth is reproduced by kind permission of Tom Mallon-McCorgray. Coin 1 has the clearest *Gada* in the right reverse field, while coin 2 has the clearest *hara* on reverse left; note also letter *ta* or *tam* at upper left on the reverse.

The first thing we learn from this coin is that the vertically arranged legends are to be read from right to left. This will help in better understanding the late Kushan gold dinars that have vertically arranged Brahmi legends.



Coin 1: 2.27 gm, 15-18 mm, die axis: 8 o'clock



Coin 2: 2.02 gm, 17-20 mm, 7 o'clock



Coin 3: 2.20 gm, 15-21 mm, 12 o'clock



Coin 4: 1.59 gm, 16-19 mm, 11 o'clock

The next question we might address is: who issued this coin type? This might help us learn something about the late Kushan gold coins with the Gadahara legend. For this, let us turn to a close examination of the coins. The obverse may be compared to that of certain Hunnic or Kidarite silver drachms, Göbl *Hunnen* 1,¹¹⁰ three variants of which have been illustrated here as coins 5-7.¹¹¹ Even the most casual glance convinces us that the person represented is the same on both coin types. The bust is

moustached and bearded; the beard is tied, and the hair is brought together in a bunch behind the head, the bunch consisting of six curls. The crown has a turret in front, an artichoke ornament in the centre and a curving ramshorn in the back. The king wears a double pearl-drop earring and a pearl necklace. The folds on the drapery are treated in an identical manner, with an elegant pearled clasp used to pin the folds together. There is a crescent nimbus in front of the face. The only difference between the basic designs of the two obverses is the presence of the legend (in Pahlavi or cursive Bactrian?) on some specimens of the silver coin.



Coin 5: 3.46 gm, 28 mm, 3 o'clock



Coin 6: 3.60 gm, 28 mm, 3 o'clock



Coin 7: 3.70 gm, 30 mm, 3 o'clock



Coin 8: 3.85 gm, 28-29 mm, 3 o'clock



Coin 9: 3.78 gm, 30 mm, 3 o'clock

¹¹⁰ Robert Göbl: *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Iranischen Hunnen in Baktrien und Indien*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967.

¹¹¹ Coin 7, which is also from my collection, varies from Göbl *Hunnen* 1 in that it carries a legend on the obverse, between the crescent nimbus in front of the king's face and the dotted border. To me it appears this legend reads, in somewhat blundered cursive Bactrian, *Ozorko*, or “Lord.” However, this reading is highly uncertain. Experts including N. Sims-Williams (in private electronic correspondence) have been unable to decipher the legend; indeed, they even say the script is unidentifiable.



Coin 10: 3.64 gm, 27-29 mm, 3 o'clock

Coins 5-7 themselves are closely related to two other silver drachm types, illustrated as coins 8 and 9, which are specimens of Göbl *Hunnen* 4 and 5. Coins 8 and 9 have been assigned by Joe Cribb to the Kidarite king, Peroz III.¹¹² Although coin 9 carries the name of Varahran, it also has a Brahmi letter *Pi* in the right obverse field, which presumably stands for Piroz, and coin 8 has the Brahmi legend *Sha Piro* above.¹¹³ Note that both these coins have the Brahmi letter *ta* (*tam*) in the reverse exergue. Finally, I have also listed as coin 10 an example of a silver drachm of Kidara, Göbl *Hunnen* 14. The attribution of this coin is quite certain because it carries a Brahmi legend at right on the obverse that reads *Kidara Kushana Sha*. I should point out also the "monogram" in the reverse exergue: a Brahmi *sha* rather than the *ta* or *tam* seen earlier. But the key aspect that needs to be noted about this coin is the crown. It is turreted front and back, with a central artichoke-type globe. Thus the crown on our subject coin type and coins 5-7, which has a turret in front and a ramshorn at the back is a hybrid of the crowns on coins 8-9 (Peroz, double ramshorn) and coin 10 (Kidara, double turrets). In Göbl's ordering of these coins, the hybrid coin comes first (Göbl *Hunnen* 1) followed by the Peroz coins (Göbl *Hunnen* 4 and 5) and then the coin of Kidara (Göbl *Hunnen* 14).

The comparison of our copper coin to these silver issues reveals the second key point we learn from it, that it was not a Kushan issue, but rather an issue of the new power emerging in Bactria and Gandhara, the Huns who issued the silver coins. Thus the Gadahara issues can firmly be assigned to a post-Kushan dynasty, a Hunnic dynasty that has come to be known as the Kidarites. But we still would like to know the name of the king who issued it.

Before we move on, I wish to note an interesting observation I made as I recorded the details of these silver drachms. I noticed that all of coins 5-10 had their die axis at 3 o'clock. To see whether this was a fluke or something more systematic, I looked at the die axes of another 10 silver drachms from this series that I had in my collection. I found that 8 of them had die axes at 3 o'clock, while the other two had die axes at 9 o'clock. It, therefore, appears that there was a conscious attempt to keep the obverse and reverse of these coins aligned at a 90° angle and the quality control on this was quite good.

Let us turn now to the Gadahara gold dinars to which our coin is related. Below, I have illustrated six coins, the first five of which carry the legend *Gadahara*. In what follows, I assume that the vertically arranged words should be read from right to left, as the different parts of the word *Gada-hara* are arranged on the copper coin we are studying. This arrangement also yields standard legend constructions, as we know them from the coins with circular legends. Coin 11 (Göbl 600) carries the legend *Gadahara Yasada Kushan* or possibly *Gadahara-zāda Kushan*.¹¹⁴ This coin has the "monogram" *tamda* on the reverse. Coins 12-14 all carry the legend *Gadahara Piroz Kushan*; they differ only in

the monograms. Coin 12 has *tamda* on the reverse, coin 13 has *tam* on the obverse, and coin 14 has *sha* on the reverse. Coin 15 carries the legend *Gadahara Kirada Kushan* and has the monogram *ru* on the obverse. Finally, coin 16 is an issue of Kidara as it features that name under the king's arm. On this coin, the word *Gadahara* is replaced with what appears to be the word *Kushan* so that word seems to appear twice. There is no *ta* or *tam* monogram on this coin.



Coin 11: 7.82 gm, 18 mm, 12 o'clock



Coin 12: 7.77 gm, 18 mm, 1 o'clock



Coin 13: 7.78 gm, 19-20 mm, 12 o'clock



Coin 14: 7.80 gm, 21-22 mm, 12 o'clock



Coin 15: 7.80 gm, 21 mm, 1 o'clock



Coin 16: 7.74 gm, 22 mm, 12 o'clock

¹¹² For the attribution of the silver type to Peroz III, see Joe Cribb: "Numismatic Evidence for Kushano-Sasanian Chronology," *Studia Iranica*, Tome 19, fasc 2, 1990, pp. 151-193.

¹¹³ On the illustrations in Göbl, the legend seems to have another letter, possibly the compound conjunct *ysa*, which would stand for the Persian sound *za*, making the name *Sha Piroz*.

¹¹⁴ In a recent paper, I have suggested that the legend below the king's arm on this coin might be intended to read *zāda* since we know the Brahmi compound *ysa* was used to represent the foreign sound *za*. See Pankaj Tandon: "The Western Kshatrapa Dāmazāda," *Numismatic Chronicle*, 2009 (forthcoming).

Unfortunately, the gold dinars all carry the characteristic tall Kushan style crown and so the crowns give us no clue as to the identity of the issuers of the respective coins. According to Göbl's chronology, the *Yasada* coins come first, followed by the Peroz and Kirada coins running in parallel in separate oficinas, with the Kidara coin coming afterwards. Cribb (pp. 179-180), on the other hand, places the Kirada coins before the Peroz coins, followed by the Kidara coins. So both authors agree that Kidara comes at the end of this sequence of coins and this would mean that our copper Gadahara coin precedes Kidara chronologically. Since the Peroz silver drachms (and also the scyphate gold dinars of the Kushano-Sasanian style) carry a double ramshorn crown, it would seem that our coin is not a Peroz issue either as our coin features the hybrid crown with only one ramshorn combined with a turret in the front.

So might our coin be a Kirada issue? I would argue that the evidence of the gold dinars goes against this, as the Kirada coins, like our coin 15, do not carry the *ta* or *tam* monogram. The different issues (Göbl 603, 605, 607 and 609) of Kirada all carry different monograms. There is one specimen of one issue (Göbl 610A) that has a reverse letter that could be a *ta*, but the style of this letter is quite different, and it might be a *na* rather than a *ta*. So that leaves the *Yasada* coin as the only possible companion to our copper piece. It seems this might be the most plausible dinar type to which we can connect our coin.

Who issued the *Yasada* coin? We do not have a definitive answer to this question. Nor do we yet know the significance of the word or name Gadahara. Given the arrangement of the legend, as *Gadahara Yasada Kushan*, it seems that *Gadahara* is a title, which has replaced the title *Shaonanoshao* that we saw in the early Kushan legends.¹¹⁵ On our coin, however, *Gadahara* is the only word present, which would indicate that it is a name. I have suggested elsewhere¹¹⁶ that the word that has been read as *Yasada* might possibly be meant to be read as *zāda*, as the compound Brahmi letter *ysa* has been used to represent the sound *za*, for which Brahmi had no representation. The word *zāda* means "son of" in Persian. If this were the correct reading, then the "Yasada" coin could be an issue of the son of Gadahara, *Gadahara-zāda*. Whether Gadahara was a person, a place or a title would still be uncertain.

Despite these uncertainties, one key thing we did learn from our copper coin is that the Gadahara issues were not Kushan issues at all, but Kidarite. More work and more evidence are needed to establish the chronology of individual kings of this dynasty¹¹⁷.

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THE NUMISMATIC STUDY OF EARLY MEDIAEVAL VIDARBHA: PARAMĀRAS OF VIDARBHA

By Amol Bankar and Rajesh Somkuwar.



1) Vidarbha as a battlefield of the Western Chālukyas and Paramāras

After the downfall of the Vākātakas, there was no imperial family ruling Vidarbha. The centre of political power had shifted successively to the Chālukyas of Badāmi, the Rāstrakutas and, finally, the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇi. Though western Vidarbha was occupied by the later Chālukyas, the Paramāras of Dhār raided and occupied some portion of eastern Vidarbha.¹ The Jain poet, Merutunga, recounted a story in his work '*Prabandha Chintāmaṇi*', "Once the Paramāra king, Vākpati-Munja, planned to invade the Chālukya dominion, but his wise minister, Rudrāditya, advised him not to cross the Godāvāri, which was the boundary between the Chālukya and Paramāra dominions. Munja did not heed his advice and was taken captive by Tailapa. He was placed in a prison and was waited upon by Tailapa's sister, Mārṇalāvati. He fell in love with her and foolishly disclosed his plan of escape to her, she communicated it to Tailapa, who is said to have made him beg from door to door and then beheaded him". Among the successors of Tailapa I, the most famous is Vikramāditya VI, the founder of the Chālukya-Vikrama Samvat. He ascended the throne in AD 1075. He had to fight against the Cholas, the Chālukyas of Gujarāt and the Hoysālas, and singly defeated them. He also led an expedition against Vengi. Two inscriptions of his reign have been found in Vidarbha.² One of them, called the Sitabuldi pillar inscription, seems to have originally belonged to the Vindhyāsana hill at Bhāndak (Coordinates: 20°6'N, 79°10'E). It is dated to Śaka year 1008 (AD 1087) and registers the grant of some *nivartanas* of land for the grazing of cattle, made by a dependant of a feudatory called Dhadibhandaka.³ Vikramāditya's reign is renowned on account of some learned men who flourished at his court. Bilhaṇa, who was patronised by him, wrote the '*Vikramānkadeva Ārita*'. In his poetical biography, Bilhaṇa recorded the eulogies of the ancestors of Vikramāditya, who had conquered the Paramāra territories, several times.⁴

On the other hand, a large stone inscription now deposited in the Nāgpur Museum, traces the genealogy of the Paramāra Prince Naravarman from Vairisimha. It is dated to VS 1161 (AD 1104-05) and records the grant of two villages to a temple which was probably situated at Bhāndak - some of the places mentioned in the inscription can be identified in the vicinity. Thus, Mokhalipataka is probably Mokhar, 80 km west of Bhāndak. Vyapura, the name of the *mandala* in which it was situated, may be represented by Vurgaon, 48 km from Mokhar.⁵ All these records create a picture that Vidarbha witnessed an inexhaustible struggle between these two dynasties to augment their territories.

¹¹⁵ The typical Kanishka legend, for example, was *Shaonanoshao Kanishki Koshano* and of Huvishka was *Shaonanoshao Oishki Koshano*.

¹¹⁶ See note 8.

¹¹⁷ Editors note: the illustrations in this article have not been reproduced actual size nor are the illustrations of the different series in scale to each other; the aim has been to facilitate reading of the coin legends and viewing of the various features mentioned in the article.