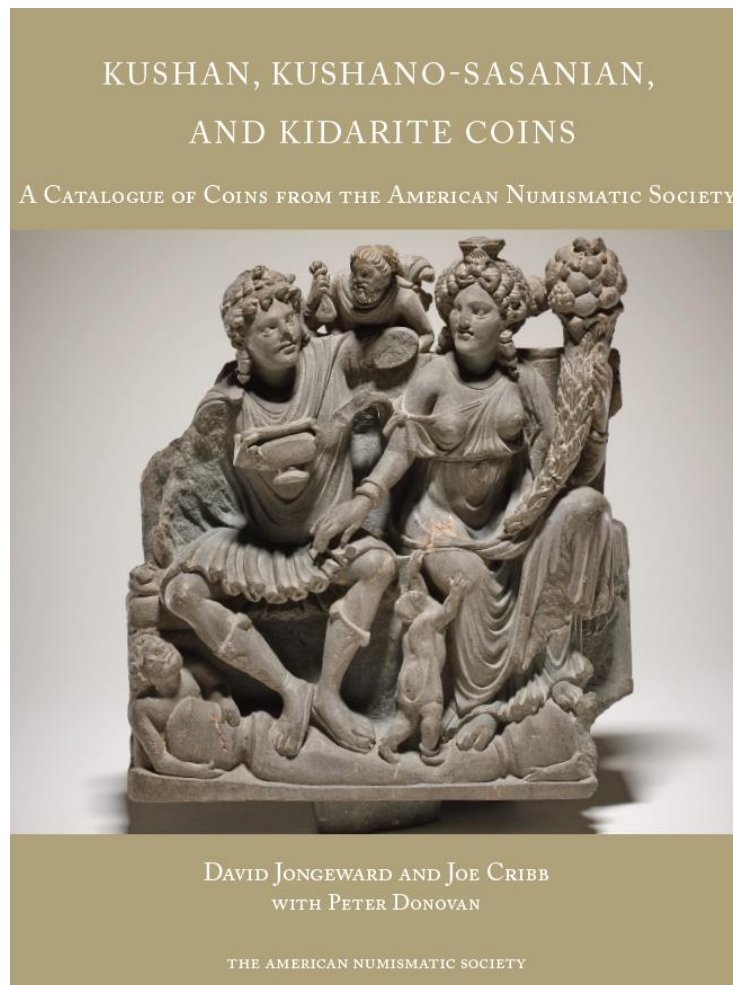


Review of *Kushan, Kushano-Sasanian, and Kidarite Coins: A Catalogue of Coins from the American Numismatic Society* by David Jongeward and Joe Cribb with Peter Donovan, New York: The American Numismatic Society, 2015. Hardcover, 322 pages plus 79 plates. ISBN 978-0-89722-334-8



This long-awaited and very welcome volume publishes for the first time the collection of Kushan, Kushano-Sasanian and Kidarite coins at the American Numismatic Society. Added to the ANS collection is a small group of coins from the collection of the late Dr. Larry Adams. A total of 2,638 coins are catalogued, broken down as follows:

Kushan (including Da Yuezhi)	1,688
Kushano-Sasanian	720
Kidarite	36
Unidentifiable	26
Imitations of Kanishka I	168

By any measure, this is a substantial collection, no doubt the most important public collection of these coins in North America, and the authors deserve our thanks for publishing it. Even though the ANS collection is now available online, having the entire collection available in a single catalogue is a great service to all collectors and students of these coinages.

As the authors point out, this is the first new listing of Kushan coins since the 1993 publication of Robert Göbl's catalogue of the coins at Bern,¹ and the first catalogue in English since the appearance of Michael Mitchiner's catalogue of ancient coins.² Much has been discovered in Kushan numismatics since these dates and so this new catalogue is particularly welcome, especially to readers who do not read German.

Since one of the authors (Joe Cribb) has been at the center of much of the new research on all three coinages treated here, the catalogue reflects many aspects of a new understanding of them. For instance, this is our first look at the reorganization of the entire coinage following the results of die studies conducted at the British Museum. Göbl's system of "officinae" based on the Roman model³ has been abandoned, as there is no evidence that the Kushans and their successors used such a system. Instead, it appears that the coins were struck at the mint at (typically two) work stations which shared dies. This discovery has given rise to a much simpler organization for the coinage. In addition, the catalogue incorporates the chronology and numismatic organization for the Kushano-Sasanian and Kidarite series developed and published by Cribb.⁴

Apart from the reorganization of the coinages, the volume incorporates new attributions that have emerged over the past twenty years or so. For example, the coinage previously assigned to a Yuezhi prince "Heraus" has here been merged with the coinage of Kujula Kadphises.⁵ We are now fairly certain that "Soter Megas" was Wima Takto and the catalogue reflects that. The imitation Heliocles coinage, previously assigned to unspecified "Scythian" tribes, has here been divided up between Kujula and Wima Takto. Göbl's kings "Xodeshah" and "Vaskushana" have been eliminated. Göbl's category of "Majores domus" for the late Kushan kings has been divided up and assigned to the kings Mahi, Shaka and Kipunadha, along with the Kidarite kings Yasada, Kirada, Peroz and Kidara. And these are just the most obvious reattributions!

The foregoing paragraph should give the reader a sense of just how much has changed in Kushan numismatics in the past couple of decades, which is why this volume is so welcome at this time. That being said, it is worth remembering that this is a *collection* catalogue, not a comprehensive one, which means that it does not give us a complete picture of absolutely the whole coinage. For that, we must wait for the new British Museum catalogue to appear in print; this volume gives us a preview. While the ANS collection is quite large and has a reasonably representative collection, it is a collection largely created through a number of separate gifts

¹ Robert Göbl: *Donum Burns: Die Kušānmünzen im Münzkabinett Bern und die Chronologie*, Vienna: Fassbaender, 1993.

² Michael Mitchiner: *Oriental Coins and their Values: The Ancient and Classical World*, London: Hawkins Publications, 1978. The listing of Kushan coins in Mitchiner's newer catalogue, *Ancient Trade and Early Coinage*, London: Hawkins Publications, 2004, stops with the coinage of Wima Takto.

³ Robert Göbl: *Münzprägung des Kušānreiches*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984.

⁴ Joe Cribb: "Numismatic Evidence for Kushano-Sasanian chronology," *Studia Iranica*, Vol. 19, pp. 151-193 and "The Kidarites: the Numismatic Evidence," pp. 91-146 in M. Alram *et. al.* (eds.): *Coins, Art and Chronology II*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010.

⁵ Joe Cribb: "The Heraus coins: their attribution to the Kushan king Kujula Kadphises," pp. 107-134 in M. Price, A. Burnett and R. Bland (eds.): *Essays in Honor of Robert Carson and Kenneth Jenkins*, London: Spink, 1993.

rather than a steady process of curated purchasing. As a result, there are quite significant gaps in the collection as well.

Many of the ANS collection's most important coins have previously been published by Göbl, as he had studied the collection in writing his catalogue. But there are still some coins being published here for the first time. The most important of these is coin 374, a quarter dinar of Kanishka I with Helios reverse. This is the first known quarter dinar from the earliest phase of Kanishka's coinage, when the legends were all still in Greek (recall that very soon thereafter, the language of the legends was changed to Bactrian). Until now, we have known of only full dinars from this period, so this coin is an important new type that shows the greater complexity of this "Greek" phase. The presentation of the coin, as one of several quarter dinars in Kanishka's "Early Phase," does not do it justice and many readers are likely to miss its significance. It should have been presented before any other Kanishka coins, as it pre-dates all the other coins listed, being the only coin from the Greek phase in the catalogue. Oddly, the listing of the coin does not inform us (as other such listings do) that an enlargement of the reverse of this important coin is available on page 269.



Coin 374

A very welcome feature of the catalogue is that the coin images are presented in color (albeit on plates at the end of the book, rather than the more-preferred presentation with the listings) and there are enlargements of many of the images of the most important coins. This allows the catalogue to particularly showcase some of the exceptionally rare coins in the ANS collection, such as: the window (258) and enthroned (260) type double dinars and the chariot type dinar (265) of Wima Kadphises; the Manaobago (385) and Mazdooano (386) dinars and the unique Helios quarter dinar (374) of Kanishka I; the Manaobago (715, 716), Skandakumara (723), elephant-rider (752, 753) and four-armed Oesho (776) dinars and Serapis quarter dinars (724, 725) of Huvishka; the Vasudeva I dinar with the bull licking Oesho's feet (1083); the unique dinar of Kanishka II with a B monogram (1201); the Peroz II dinar (2342); the Peroz III dinar (2416); and the extremely rare Kidarite half dinar in the name of Varahran (2431). It is wonderful to see these rarities in color, and often in enlargement.

The catalogue, including the listing of Kanishka I imitations from northern and eastern India in Appendix A, occupies the first 250 pages of the volume and is followed by several bonus Appendices. Appendix D compiles images of all the tamghas, or dynastic symbols, seen

on the coins. Appendix B provides a very useful listing of the portrait types in the coinage of Huvishka. Huvishka had so many portrait types that a collector could become quite easily overwhelmed. This Appendix provides a large color image of each type in the ANS collection in order to assist in clarifying the differences between the portraits. It might have been desirable to present a similar listing of Kanishka's portrait types. While there are not that many of them, they play such an important role in understanding Kanishka's coinage that a convenient listing of them would have been very useful.

Appendix C consists of a truly unique feature of the catalogue and perhaps its *pièce de résistance*: a 43-page listing of all the deities featured on Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian coins. Color images are provided and each listing includes a brief introduction to each deity. Deities not represented on any ANS coins are also listed. Since many of the deities on these coins are quite obscure, most readers will find this Appendix to be highly informative and an invaluable reference. In this context, mention may be made of the rather odd choice of cover illustration: the beautiful sculpture of Panchika and Hariti (perhaps Pharro and Ardochsho of the Kushan pantheon) from Takht-i-Bahi in the British Museum collection. There is no reference to the sculpture anywhere in the catalogue. Given that it is not a coin, nor even in the ANS collection, one wonders what it is doing gracing the dust cover of the book. It is truly a magnificent object but there are any number of magnificent coins in the collection any one of which may have been a more appropriate choice for the cover.

Following the Appendices, there is a very helpful concordance of the catalogue's listings to the numbers used by Göbl in his catalogue. These Göbl numbers are also provided with each listing, along with Mitchiner numbers for the coinages of Kujula and Wima Takto. Such cross-referencing is very useful to collectors who may have classified their coins according to an earlier catalogue and may wish to easily reattribute them according to ANS Kushan. Given that many collectors do use Mitchiner, as Göbl's catalogue is out of print and hard to find, a concordance to Mitchiner and MAC numbers throughout the catalogue may have been useful. It might also have been useful to provide a listing of the coins from the Adams collection, as these have not been included in any previous studies.

Readers will no doubt have gleaned that this reviewer is delighted with this volume, both with its content and its overall presentation. Any deficiencies noted have been of a relatively minor nature. If there is one drawback that is not so minor, it is that the volume stands to a large extent on the foundation of the as yet unpublished British Museum catalogue. So, while the coinage has been reorganized and many attributions changed from previous studies, there is little detail provided here of the reasons for these changes. The reader interested in the whys and the wherefores will therefore be sorely disappointed. This shortcoming in the ANS volume has been caused by the delay in the publication of the BMC, which was scheduled to be released originally in 2013. Had that deadline been met, the ANS catalogue could have referred more fully to it and there would have been no sense of a perceived shortcoming. As it stands, the prior publication of this catalogue increases our anticipation for the BMC. Its authors would do well to prioritize its completion: the world awaits!

Once the British Museum catalogue is published, the ANS catalogue will stand as a very accomplished ancillary, providing valuable data from a very important public collection. In the

meantime, it gives us a preview of the thorough reorganization of the coinage to which the BM research has led. It belongs on the shelf of anyone seriously interested in the coinage of the Kushans and their related dynasties.

Pankaj Tandon