

envoy and sent him back, and from that moment they bore a grudge (against the Han).”

**Note ed.:** Thierry (2005: 494, fn. 116) refers to a gloss specifying the pronunciation of the “antelopes” as *fu-bo*, not *fu-ba*. According to HHS 118,22 they resemble Chinese unicorns without the horn (符拔形似麟而無角), according to a gloss in Sui-tang 《通典·邊防八·條支》, they are like deer with long hair (似鹿, 長毛).

### 071 – Year AD ±89 = year 136 of Azes: Kujula nameless, sick (?), as *khuṣaṇa*

Taxila silver scroll inscription, Konow 1929: 70f., no. 27, CKI 60; Konow 1929: 77 [+ed.]:

1: *sa 1 100 20 10 4 1 1 ayasa aṣaḍasa masasa divase 10 4 1 (...)*

3: *maharajasa rajatirajasa devaputrasa khuṣaṇasa arogadakṣiṇae (...)*

“In the year 136 of (the era of) Azes, on the 15th day of month Āṣāḍha (...) for the gift of health of the *mahārāja rājātirāja devaputra* Khuṣaṇa (...)”

**Note Fussman:** That is your supposition. There is no name: It could be Kujula, Sōtēr, even Wima Kadphises. The term *arogadakṣiṇae* does not mean that the Emperor is sick. It means only that the donor wishes the Emperor good health now and in the future.

### 072 – Year AD ±89 or ±90: Kujula dies

HHS 88/118.9a-9b (2921), 《後漢書·列傳·西域傳·30》; Zürcher 1968: 367, Pulleyblank 1968: 247-248, Hill 2009/2015: 28f.:

丘就卻年八十餘死,

“Ch’iu-chiu chü [Kujula Kadphises] died when over eighty years of age.”

**Note Hill:** “I.e. over 79 by Western reckoning, as Chinese count their age as beginning at 1 at birth.”

**Note Fussman:** Don’t take numbers too literally, cf. the age of Buddha.

## Events in the time of Vema Takhtu alias Sōtēr megas

### 073 – Years and titles for Vema Takhtu: AD 90-104

as “King \*Ta(k)” in a Chinese chronicle: AD 90 (§ 074)

as βασιανδε βα ι βωγο ι στοργο (...) κορανο ι ραβοτογο ι βαγο ι ηζνογο in year 279 = AD 104 (§ 090).

**Note ed.:** On the form of the name Vema Takhtu cf. Falk 2009.

### 074 – Year AD 90: Kushan king/viceroy attacks Ban Chao west of Kucha and is beaten back

**Content:** A “king” or “viceroy” of the Kushans fought with Ban Chao. He is referred to

as Xie 謝. This could be a personal name or a title. Enoki (1968) dealt with the possible ancient pronunciation and sees two ways, based on old phonetic developments: either a pronounced /zia/ stands for *ṣāhi*, or a /diak/ refers to a name containing a syllable *ṣka*. Thierry (2005: 481) hesitatingly proposed to take /dzyǎg/ (Zürcher after Karlgren) as continuing in /ta/, as 謝 is still pronounced in Vietnamese Chinese, and linked it to Takhtu, the name of the second king of the Kushans. The episode is contained in the HHS and in the slightly earlier HHJ.

• HHS 47/77.7a–7b (1580) 《後漢書·列傳·班梁列傳·13》, cf. HHJ 《後漢紀·13》; Chavannes 1906: 232–233, YU 2004: 178, Thierry 2005: 492, texte 6, Zürcher 1968: 370 (HHS), YE (HHJ, personal communication):

HHS: 永元二年, 月氏遣其副王謝, 兵七萬攻超。超眾少, 皆大恐。

HHJ: 是夏, 月氏王謝將七萬騎攻班超, 超眾大恐。

HHS: 超譬軍士曰:

HHJ: 超曰:

HHS: “月氏兵雖多, 然數千里踰蔥嶺來, 非有運輸, 何足憂邪?”

HHJ: “月氏兵雖多, 千里逾蔥嶺, 何足憂哉!”

HHS: “In the second year of the Yongyuan 永元 reign-period (A.D. 90), the Yuezhi 月氏 sent their viceroy Xie 謝 with seventy thousand soldiers to attack [Ban] Chao [班]超. [Ban] Chao’s [班]超 troops were few in number, and they were all much afraid. [Ban] Chao [班]超 gave the soldiers explicit instructions and said, ‘the troops of Yuezhi 月氏 are many, but they are nothing to be worried about because they came here crossing the Cong 葱 Mountains and travelled several thousand *li* 里, and there was no conveyance.’”

HHJ: “This summer, the Yuezhi king \*Ta(k) 謝 was going to attack Ban Chao with 70,000 horsemen. Chao’s people were much afraid. Chao said, ‘Although the Yuezhi soldiers are many, they are nothing to be worried about since they came here crossing the Cong Mountains, and there was no conveyance.’”

HHS: 但當收穀堅守, 彼飢窮自降, 過數十日決矣。

HHJ: 但當收穀堅守, 饑窮自降, 不過數十日決矣。”

HHS: “As long as we hide provisions and strengthen the defence works, they will surrender because they are hungry and have no way out. The outcome will be known just dozens of days later.”

HHS: 謝遂前攻超, 不下, 又鈔掠無所得。

HHJ: 謝攻超, 不能下, 抄掠無所得。

“Xie 謝 thereupon advanced and attacked [Ban] Chao [班]超, but he could not defeat



him. Moreover, he [let his armies] plunder and pillage, but they did not get anything.”

HHS: 超度其糧盡，必從龜茲求救，乃遣兵數百於東界要之。

HHJ: 超度其糧盡，必從龜茲求食，乃遣數千兵伏東界要之。

謝果遣騎齎金銀珠玉以賂龜茲。超伏兵遮擊，盡殺之，持其使首以示謝。

HHJ: 謝果遣騎齎金銀珠玉往龜茲，伏兵遮擊，盡殺之，遣持所斬以示謝。

HHS: “[Ban] Chao [班]超 considered that [Xie]’s 謝 provisions were almost exhausted and that he certainly would ask help from Qiuci 龜茲, and he sent several hundred soldiers to the eastern border in order to meet them [i.e. Xie’s 謝 envoys to Qiuci 龜茲]. Xie 謝 indeed sent horsemen carrying gold, silver, pearls and jade as presents for [the king of] Qiuci 龜茲. But [Ban] Chao [班]超 laid an ambush to intercept and attack them, and killed them all, and they took the heads of the envoys and showed them to Xie 謝.”

HHS: 謝大驚，即遣使請罪，願得生歸。(HHJ id.)

“Xie 謝 was greatly alarmed. He immediately sent an envoy [to Ban Chao 班超] to confess his crime and [say that] he wished to be permitted to return alive.”

HHS: 超縱遣之。月氏由是大震，歲奉貢獻。

HHJ: 超縱遣之。月氏震怖，歲歲奉貢。

HHS: “[Ban] Chao [班]超 let him go and sent him away. From that moment Yuezhi 月氏 was deeply impressed [literally: “shaken” (with fear), CHING], [by the power of Han 漢] and paid tribute every year.”

**Note ed.:** Apart from the title both versions say the same. The HHJ appears to formulate more simply, while the HHS is comparably verbose. The HS knows a “viceroy” 副王 for the states of Kangju 康居 and Dayuan 大宛; the otherwise unheard-of “viceroy” of the Kushans in the HHS is probably an attempt of the author(s) to get along with two kings at the same time, not realizing that Yangaozhen (Vema Kushan) and Ta(k) (Takhtu) are one and the same. The difference seems to arise from the sources: The name resembling Ta(k) is used by Ban Chao, who fought against him, while Yangaozhen could go back to one of the many additional sources used by Fan Ye 范曄 (AD 398-445) for the HHS.

• HHS 4/34, (170) 《後漢書·紀·孝和孝殤帝紀·28》 The Imperial Chronicles contain a summary of these events, Thierry 2005: 494, texte 9:

月氏國遣兵攻西域長史班超，超擊降之。

“Dans la 2<sup>e</sup> année de l’ère Yong Yuan (...) le royaume des Grands Yuezhi envoya des soldats attaquer Ban Chao, le gouverneur général des Territoires d’Occident, [Ban] Chao les vainquit et les soumit.”

### 075 – Who is 謝: Read /xie/ or /tak/?

Who was the “viceroy” 副王 Xie 謝, who attacked the Chinese in AD 90? Within the Yuezhi hierarchy both terms are singular. No other “supplementary king / viceroy” is known among them, nor any other person by name of Xie or similar. Thierry (2005: 281) makes use of the Vietnamese pronunciation of Chinese signs, which in many cases is very archaic, as he demonstrates on his page 444. In our case he shows that the sign in question is pronounced /tə/ in Vietnam, comparable to what Karlgren reconstructed as the pronunciation in Old Chinese as /dzyǎŋ/ (Pulleyblank 1962: 221 starts with \*sǎks). A pronunciation /tak/ is thus quite possible and would compare to the Prakritic spelling *vema-takho* as found on the bull-and-camel copper coins of Vema Takhto found in Kashmir.

As Thierry points out, the parallel in the Hou Hanji has “Xie” not as Viceroy 副王, but as the King 王 himself. Thierry expects a clerical error in one of the two works. The composition of the HHJ in the middle of the 4th cent. AD antedates the one of the HHS at the beginning of the 5th. While the HHS Viceroy named “Xie” remains enigmatic, the HHJ with its King, if read “Ta(k)”, provides a simple solution.

### 076 – Year AD 91: Ban Chao becomes governor in Kucha

HHS 47/77.7a-7b (1581), 《後漢書·列傳·班梁列傳·14》; Chavannes 1906: 233-234:

明年, (...) 乃以超為都護, (...) 超居龜茲它乾城,

“L’année suivante (91 p.C.) (...) >(Pan) Tch’ao< reçut le titre de Protecteur général (>tou-hou<) (...) <(Pan) Tch’ao< établit sa résidence dans la ville de >To-k’ien<, (du pays) de >K’ieou-tseu< (Koutcha).”

### 077 – Year after AD ±90 and before AD ±112: Vema Takhtu succeeds Kujula

HHS 88/118.9a (2921), 《後漢書·列傳·西域傳·30》; Zürcher 1968: 367, Hill 2015,I: 28f.:

丘就卻年八十餘死,

“Qiujiuque [Kujula Kadphises] was more than eighty [...] when he died.”

子閻膏珍代為王。

復滅天竺, 置將一人監領之。月氏自此之後, 最為富盛, 諸國稱之皆曰貴霜王。漢本其故號, 言大月氏云。

“His son, Yangaozhen [Vima Takhtu], became king in his place.

(He produced) a complete collapse of Tianzhu [Northwestern India] and installed a general to supervise and lead it. The Yuezhi then became extremely rich.

All the kingdoms call [their king] the Guishuang [Kushan] king, but the Han call them by their original name, Da Yuezhi.”

**Note ed.:** /Yan-gao-zhen/ in Mandarin has to be contrasted with /yim-gou-zan/ in



Cantonese pronunciation which is decidedly closer to the suspected basis of “Vima Kuṣāna” (cf. § 089).

## 078 – Vema Takhtu issues Sōtēr megas coinage

**Note ed.:** The Chinese coinage of the early centuries preserved its style, as it does not name ruling kings or react to dynastic changes. Someone like “Xie/Ta(k)” with close contact to Chinese monetary habits after attacking Ban Chao in Xinjiang must have understood the advantage of anonymity, that frees any successor from having huge masses of coins freshly designed and minted. The anonymous Sōtēr megas coinage seems to copy the anonymous Chinese system. The following lines reflect the amazement on the Chinese side when confronted with foreign personalized coins.

• SJ 73 (3162), 《史記·列傳·大宛列傳·11》; Thierry 2005: 525, texte 38, Watson 1993,II: 235:n’ “以銀為錢，錢如其王面，王死輒更錢，效王面焉。

“The coins of the country [Anxi/Parthia ed.] are made of silver and bear the face of the king. When the king dies, the currency is immediately changed and new coins issued with the face of his successor.”

• HS 3889 (96A.9a–9b); Thierry 2005: 525, texte 39, Hulsewé 1979: 116:

亦以銀為錢，文獨為王面，幕為夫人面。王死輒更鑄錢。

“Likewise they use silver to make coin, the obverse being decorated exclusively with the [image] of the king’s face and the reverse with that of his consort. Whenever a king dies, a change of coinage is cast.”

**Note Cribb:** There is no connection to Chinese coinage. The national type of the Sōtēr megas coins is produced only in Begram. No name is given because he is the famous king, i.e. Kujula Kadphises. Then Vima Takto retains the design, but on two issues adds his initial *vi* (in Kharoṣṭhī) and on one of these also *oo* (in Greek) and on the other his name *vema* (in Kharoṣṭhī). The distribution of the coins show that all the main issues of Sōtēr megas coins emanated from Begram, with only a couple of smaller local issues in places captured under Vima Takto in addition to the main issue.

**Note ed.:** The singular anonymity is the connection spoken of, not weight or shape or legends. If being famous was the reason for the anonymity, then all following famous Kushans could have followed the example. If, as Cribb (2015) maintains, Kujula started the Sōtēr megas type, then the fact that the type was copied to the extent of a nation-wide distribution shows that his son understood the idea. Cribb’s arguments for Kujula as the issuer of the short-lived first Sōtēr megas issues showing four prongs on the tamka are reasonable but certainly not enough to exclude the simple alternative view that it was Vema Takhtu who started it all. The site at Begram was held by Kujula as well as by Vema Takhtu, and thus does not provide an argument in either direction. In Cribb’s model too, it was the issues of Vema Takhtu which form the bulk of the Sōtēr megas coins preserved. The sheer quantity of the standard “nameless” issues shows that this king didn’t need to issue alternative types for a long time, meaning that it wasn’t until

the Rabatak inscription that his name was disclosed and the existence of Vema Takhtu finally demonstrated.

### 079 – Year ca. AD 90: An unknown relative or a Mahākṣatrapa as governor?

**Context:** Cribb (2015) has amply demonstrated that the alternative types with Vema's name or his supposed initial *vi* are confined to certain regions. The following coin is not dealt with in the said publication, but it introduces a further person and thus may be useful to reconstruct the forms of government within the royal family.

- Coin from Kashmir or vicinity, in the bull-camel style of Kujula and Vema Takhtu. The obverse reads (*\*basi*)EΩN OOHM(\*?), so that only Vema Takhtu can have provided the prototype. Falk 2010: 78, fig. 3:

/// *ja-potra-mahakṣadavasa* ... ///

“Of the Mahākṣatrapa NN, grand-son (of the king?).”

**Note ed.:** This also pertains to the question of whether *kṣatrapas* or *mahākṣatrapas* were in the service of the Kushans. While the Kṣaharāta and Kardamaka dynasties act completely without Kushan directives, other *kṣatrapas* are found holding offices in the Kushan realm in datable contexts. One, called Tīra, was active in Azes 121 = AD ±73, i.e. in the time of Kujula, south-west of Peshawar (Falk 2014: 9), others are known from the times of Kanīṣka and Huviṣka. A Mahākṣatrapa ruling for Vema Takhtu in Kashmir is thus likely. Something similar seems to be expressed in the much discussed statement dealing with the conquest of India by Vema Takhtu, above § 77:

- HHS 88/118.9b (2122), 《後漢書·列傳·西域傳·32》, Hill 2015,I: 28f.:

復滅天竺，置將一人監領之。

“(He produced) a complete collapse of Tianzhu [Northwestern India] and installed a general to supervise and lead it.”

### 080 – Year AD 97: Expedition/embassy sent by Ban Chao to Rome

HHS 88/118 (2918), 《後漢書·列傳·西域傳·22》; Hill 2009+2015,I: 23:

和帝永元九年，都護班超遣甘英使大秦，抵條支。臨大海欲度，而安息西界船人謂英曰： (...)

英聞之乃止。

“In the ninth Yongyuan year [97 CE], during the reign of Emperor He, the Protector General Ban Chao sent Gan Ying to Da Qin [the Roman Empire]. He reached Tiaozhi [Characene and Susiana] next to a large sea. (...)

[and heard that he needed three years to cross it ed.].

When [Gan] Ying heard this, he discontinued (his trip).”



**Note ed.:** On the diverse locations and itineraries, identifying Tiaozhi with Characene cf. Leslie & Gardiner 1996: 260f.

## 081 – Years AD 89-105: Embassies from Kushan India to the Chinese Court

**Content:** The context is ambiguous, speaking about the Kushans having taken northern India. Follow the embassies in the time of Emperor He and the subsequent disruption effected through an uprising in the Western countries. Did Indian kings send tribute to China through Xinjiang before the Kushans took over? Follow years AD 159 and 161 below, when tribute is sent again, but now clearly overseas.

HHS 88/118 (2922), 《後漢書·列傳·西域傳·33》; Hill 2009: 31:

和帝時，數遣使貢獻，  
後西域反畔，乃絕。至桓帝延熹二年、四年，頻從日南徼外來獻。

“During the reign of Emperor He [89-105 CE], they sent several envoys carrying tribute and offerings.

Later, the Western Regions rebelled, and these relations were interrupted. Then, during the second and the fourth Yanxi years in the reign of Emperor Huan [159 and 161 CE], and frequently since, [these] foreigners have arrived [by sea] at the frontiers of Rinan [Commandery south of Jiaozi] to present offerings.”

**Note Hill:** I believe it refers to the Yuezhi sending envoys to China as the previous paragraphs are referring to the Yuezhi and the regions they controlled in Juandu (India).

## 082 – Year AD 100: Ban Chao considers returning home

**Context:** In the best informed source on matters Yuezhi, Ban Chao prepares to leave the Western regions in AD 100.

HHS 47/77.7b-8b-9b, 11a (1583), 《後漢書·列傳·班梁列傳》, 18; Chavannes 1906: 234-239:

明年，下詔曰：(...)

其封超為定遠侯，邑千戶。

超自以久在絕域，年老思土。十二年，上疏曰：(...)

但願生入玉門關。臣老病衰困，冒死瞽言，謹遣子勇隨獻物入塞。及臣生在，令勇目見中土。

“L’année suivante (95 p.C.), l’empereur rendit un décret en ces termes:

‘(...) En conséquence, j’anoblis >(Pan) Tch’ao< en le faisant marquis de >Ting-yuan<; il aura un apanage de mille foyers.’

La douzième année (100 p.C.), ›(Pan) Tch'ao‹, considérant qu'il était depuis fort longtemps dans les contrées lointaines, se sentant vieux et désirant revoir son pays, adressa la requête suivante à l'empereur:

'(...) je voudrais du moins franchir encore vivant la passe de ›Yu-men‹ (...) J'ai eu soin d'envoyer mon fils ›(Pan) Yong‹ qui entrera à l'intérieur de la frontière à la suite des porteurs de présents (...) que ›(Pan) Yong‹ voie de ses propres yeux le territoire du Milieu.'

### 083 – Year before AD 102: Condition of the Yuezhi

HHS 88/118.9a-9b (2920), 《後漢書·列傳·西域傳·29》; Pulleyblank 1968: 247-248:

大月氏國居藍氏城，  
西接安息，四十九日，  
東去長史所居六千五百三十七里，去洛陽萬六千三百七十里。  
戶十萬，口四十萬，勝兵十餘萬人。

“The Great Yüeh-chih country has its capital at the city of Lan-shih (Khulm).

To the west it is 49 days' march to An-hsi (Arsak = Parthia).

To the east it is 6537 *li* to the seat of the Senior Administrator (Chang-shih) and 16370 *li* to Lo-yang.

It has 100,000 households, 400,000 mouths and over 100,000 trained soldiers.”

**Note CHING:** The rule (三十里一驛, “one post station for every 30 *li*”) is about 13 km a day for caravans. 49 days thus amount to ca. 650 km.

### 084 – How to reach countries held by the Kushans, starting at the Jade Gate

Weilue 《魏略·西戎傳》 cited in Sanguozhi 《三國志·魏書三十·倭人傳·10》; Chavannes 1905b: 528f., 538f., Hill 2004: Section 3:

從燉煌玉門關入西域，前有二道，今有三道。

“There were previously two roads, but now there are three, which go to the Western Regions from Dunhuang and the Yumen guan (‘Jade Gate Frontier Post’):”

從玉門關西出，經婁羌轉西，越葱嶺，經縣度，入大月氏，為南道。

“Heading west from the Yumen (‘Jade Gate’) Frontier Post, and passing through (the territory of) the Er Qiang (‘Rebellious Qiang’), one turns west to pass over the Congling (the Pamirs), and through the *xuandu* (the ‘hanging passages’ in northern Hunza), to enter (the territory of) the Da Yuezhi (Kushans). – This is the Southern Route.”

罽賓國、大夏國、高附國、天竺國皆並屬大月氏。



“The kingdom of Jibin (Gandhāra-Kapisha), the kingdom of Daxia (Bactria), the kingdom of Gaofu (Kabul), and the kingdom of Tianzhu (Northern India), which are all dependencies of the Da Yuezhi (Kushans) [to be reached through the southern route].”

### 085 – Year ca. AD 102: Concerning India

**Content:** The descriptions in HHS and HHJ 《後漢紀·卷15》 differ, and it seems that the HHJ speaks about countries along the Indus, while the HHS extends its scope into northern India.

• HHS 88/118.9b (2122), 《後漢書·列傳·西域傳·32》; Thierry 2005: 523, texte 35, Hill 2009+2015, I: 30f., Zürcher 1968: 368:

天竺國一名身毒，在月氏之東南數千里。(HHJ: 天竺一名身毒，)

俗與月氏同，而卑溼暑熱。其國臨大水。(HHJ: 俗與月氏同，)

“The country called T’ien-chu is also called Shen-tu; it lies several thousands of *li* south-east of the Yüeh-chih.

Its customs are the same as those of the Yüeh-chih, but it is low, humid and hot. (The capital of) this country lies on the bank of a large river.”

乘象而戰。其人弱於月氏、

“The people ride elephants into battle. They are weaker than the Yuezhi [Kushans].”

脩浮圖道，不殺伐，遂以成俗

“They practice the way of the Buddha, (and therefore) it has become a custom (among them) not to kill or attack (others).”

從月氏、高附國以西、南至西海

“If one goes from the Yüeh-chih country of Kao-fu in a south-western direction one reaches the Western Sea,”

東至磐起國、皆身毒之地。

“and in the east one reaches the country of P’an-ch’i; all this (belongs to) the territory of Shen-tu.”

• HHJ 《後漢紀·卷15》, Thierry 2005: 524, texte 34:

大月氏城 去洛陽萬六千三百七十里，其東南數千里通天竺，  
天竺一名身毒，俗與月氏同，臨大水，西通大秦。

從月氏南至西海(for 海)，東至盤越國，皆身毒地。

又有別城數十 置王，而皆總名身毒。

(氏) (其) 俗修浮圖，道不伐殺，弱而畏戰。

“La cité des Grands Yue[zhi] est distante de Luoyang de 16 370 *li*. À plusieurs milliers de *li* au sud-est de cette [ville], on atteint le Tianzhu. Le Tianzhu a aussi comme nom Shendu, ses coutumes sont les mêmes que celles des Yuezhi. Il est au bord d’une grande rivière. Par l’ouest, il communique avec le Da Qin.

À partir du sud des Yuezhi jusqu’à la Mer d’Occident, et à partir de l’est jusqu’au royaume de Panyue, tous [les territoires] sont réunis et portent le nom de Shendu.

Le peuple pratique communément la voie du Bouddha; il n’attaque ni ne tue, il est faible et redoute la guerre.”

**Notes ed.:** The beginning 大月城 has been emended to 大月氏城 with Thierry 2005: 523, fn. 210. – While some editions replace 氏 with 其, Thierry 2005: 523, fn. 211, proposes *min* 民, “people”. – HHS writes *pan-qi* 磐起, HHJ has *pan-yue* 盤越. The first spelling is found only in the HHS, the second also in the Sanguoji, where the site is located in the South-East; cf. Zürcher 1968: 368, fn. 1. – The ruler has a title which denotes “more than king” in Chinese, probably *rājātirāja*, as used by the Kushans, or *rājādhirāja* (盤越國 一名漢越王), a title used by the Guptas.

身毒有別城數百，城置長。(HHJ: nil)

“Juandu has several hundred other towns. A Chief is placed in each town.”

別國數十，國置王。(HHJ: 又有別城數十 置王)

雖各小異，而俱以身毒為名。(HHJ: 而皆總名身毒)

其時皆屬月氏。(HHJ: nil)

月氏殺其王而置將，令統其人。(HHJ: nil)

“There are several dozen other kingdoms. Each kingdom has its own king.

Although the kingdoms differ slightly, they are all still called Juandu. Now they are all subject to the Yuezhi [Kushans].

The Yuezhi [Kushans] killed their kings and installed a General to govern them.”

**Note Hill:** Several paragraphs earlier (Hill 2009+2015,I: 28, § 13), and talking about the same events, the Chinese text specifies that it was “one” general (置將一人監領之) so the author would assume that he had already sufficiently established that the term should be read in the singular here.

**Note ed.:** For the conquest of eastern India cf. § 096 on Rabatak, where Campā is mentioned as the easternmost place taken by Kaniṣka, situated at the border of present Bengal. – It seems impossible for one general to regulate affairs from the Indus to Bengal.

## 086 – Indian commerce with Rome

HHS 88/118 (2922), 《後漢書·列傳·西域傳·32》; Hill 2009+2015,I: 31:

土出象、犀、瑇瑁、金、銀、銅、鐵、鉛、錫，



西與大秦通，  
有大秦珍物。又有細布、好毳毼、諸香、石蜜、胡椒、薑、  
黑鹽。

“This region produces elephants, rhinoceroses, turtle shell, gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin.

To the west, it communicates with Da Qin [the Roman Empire].

Precious things from Da Qin can be found there, as well as fine cotton cloths, fine wool carpets, perfumes of all sorts, sugar candy, pepper, ginger, and black salt.”

### 087 – Year AD 102: Ban Chao returns home and dies

HHS 47/77.7a-7b (1586), 《後漢書·列傳·班梁列傳·21》; Chavannes 1906: 243:

超在西域三十一歲。十四年八月至洛陽， (...)  
其年九月卒，年七十一。

“(Pan) Tch’ao< était demeuré trente et un ans dans les contrées d’Occident. La quatorzième année (102 p.C.), le huitième mois, il arriva à >Lo-yang< (...)

Le neuvième mois (102 p.C.), il mourut; il était âgé de soixante et onze ans.”

**Note CHING:** Chinese 71 years old equals an age of 70 by Western reckoning.

### 088 – Year ca. ±104 at Māt: Vema takṣu, son of a nameless kuṣāṇa

**Context:** The statue of a ruler sitting on his throne was found in Māt on the eastern side of the Yamuna, opposite Mathura, in a compound which once served for the veneration of the Kushan ancestors. The king in the same position as chosen for the statue is depicted on a coin of Vema Takhtu (Cribb 2015: 99f. with fig. 60). The headless statue is one of the highlights of the Mathura Museum. The text was last discussed by Fussman (1998: 606f.) taking recourse to the standard literature. My reading is slightly different:

1: mahārājo rājātirājo devaputro

2: kuṣāṇaputro ṣāhi vema takṣu [\*a→ma]sya

3: bakanapatina hu[maṣpalena] devakula[m] kārītā

4: ārāmo puṣkariṇi udapāna[m] ca sa[bh]ā dā[ra]koṭhako -

“(This is) the Mahārāja, king over kings, son of the gods, (i.e.) son of the Kuṣāṇa (Kujula Kadphises), the Ṣāhi Vema Takṣu. Through his supervisor of religious affairs Humaṣpala (this) House of the Gods was arranged to be made, (as well as) a park, a pond, and a water supply, (as well as) a meeting hall (and) an entrance building.”

**Note ed.:** The strange *takṣumasya* has baffled all interpreters. Instead of taking it literally, as done earlier (e.g. Falk 2009: 113), all difficulties disappear once we take the *ma* as a miscopied initial *a*. *Ma* and *a* are different in some hands of the time only by the closed base-line of the *ma*. Once the genitive of *takṣuma* disappears we have a nominative *vema*

*takṣu* and a new clause starting with *asya*, comparable to the frequent *asyāṃ pūrvāyāṃ* in date formulae (cf. § 060, p. 89).

The terms may have a deeper meaning with reference to the regions under rule: *mahārāja* includes Indian subjects, *devaputra kuṣāṇaputro* clarifies his heavenly legitimation and his connection with Bactria, and *ṣāhi* could refer to regions formerly held by Parthians.

### 089 – Year AD ±104 = Yavana era 279: Vema Takhtu

• Dasht-e Nawur trilingual inscription, Greek version, “DN1”; Sims-Williams in Sims-Williams & Cribb 1995/96: 95, with fig. p. 136:

- 1: σοθ' γορπιαου ιε'
- 2: βαονανδε βα ι βωγο
- 3: ι σποργο οσημο τακτοο
- 4: κοβαγο ι ραβτογο ι λαδει-
- 5: γο ι βαγο ι ηζγογο κιδι πιδο ι
- 6: χοβε ιανε βαοδαγε λφαχ-
- 7: το

1 [in Greek]: “(Year) 279, (month) Gorpiaios, (day) 15,”

2-7 [in Bactrian]: “Of the king of kings, the great salvation, Vima Taktu the Kushan, the righteous, the just, the god worthy of worship, who according to his own will has gained the kingship (...)”

**Note ed.:** Fussman, the only editor who had the opportunity to examine the original stone before it was destroyed, strongly disputes the validity of Sims-Williams’ reading (Fussman 1998: 614-619; answered by Sims-Williams 2008: 58-59). However, there is no dispute about the reading of the date or of most letters of the name of the ruler οσημο τακτοο. (The letters το are indicated as uncertain by Sims-Williams; similarly Fussman 1998: 616: “ces conjectures sont admissibles, mais elles restent des conjectures”.)

• Dasht-e Nāwur, Kharoṣṭhī version; Fussman 1974: 22:

*saṃ 1-1-100-20-20-20-10-4-4-1 gapiu na?mana [ma?]sa[sa]*

“In the year 279, in month? Gorpiaios, (...)”

**Note ed.:** Only the Dasht-e Nāwur trilingual inscription of *vhema kuṣa* in Kharoṣṭhī and OĒMO TAKTOO in Bactrian (§ 091) provides an inscriptional date, referring to AD ±104.

### 090 – Year AD ±104: King Vhema Kuṣa = Vema Takhtu

Dasht-e Nawur trilingual inscription, Kharoṣṭhī version, “DN 4”, ed. Fussman 1974: 22, with discussion preceding; with slight adaptations by the ed.:



1: *saṃ 1-1-100-20-20-20-10-4-4-1* (= 279) *gapiu na(?)ma 1(?) [ma?]sa[sa] di<vase 10-4-1*

2: *rajatirajasa [trata](rasa?) dhramikasa(?) ...*

3: *vhema kuśasa pi [?]gadapiṇa . śea (...) sa*

“Year 279, month (...) Gorpaios, day (15), of the King over Kings, the great (...), of the lawful Vhema Kuśa, (...)”

**Note ed.:** The clear reading *vhema kuśa*, most likely rendering the more common *vema kuśaṇa*, is again proof of the difficult reception of terms in the Kushans’ own language. The same irregular sibilant is also found in *kuśānavaṃśyaḥ kaniṣka nāma rājā*, “A king of the Kuśana lineage called Kaniṣka”, in the *Bhaiṣajyavastu*, ed. N. Dutt, with corrections by K. Wille ([http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1\\_sanskrit/4\\_rellit/buddh/vinv\\_06u.htm](http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskrit/4_rellit/buddh/vinv_06u.htm)). This variant *vhema kuśa* or a similar one may have provided the basis for the Middle Chinese equivalent to modern *yangaozhen* (Mandarin) or *yimgouzan* (Cantonese) (cf. § 077).

## Events in the time of Vima Kadphises

### 091 – Year AD ±112: Date for Vima Kadphises in inscriptions: Yavana year 287

**Context:** This is the only rock inscription from the time of Vema Takhtu’s son Vima Kadphises. No reliquary inscriptions carry his name. This epigraph by the roadside mentions his name and provides a date. Khalatse lies in Ladakh, 337 km east of Srinagar, on the old road to Leh; the rock has been recently blasted when the road was modernized. The spelling of the king’s name is unique. The text is commonly reproduced from Konow 1929: 81. The date starting with 200 was first read correctly by Cribb (1997: 230, fn. 32) and met with strong scepticism. The extended beginning is obvious from a plate in G. Tucci (1958: 294, fig. 8), and went unnoticed so far. Ed.:

1: *deva[pu]/ta / maharajasa uvimo kavthisasa*

2: *sa 2 100 20 20 20 20 4 1 1 1*

“Year 287 of the *devaputra-maharaja* Vima Kadphises, Year 287.”

### 092 – Kushan kings not named on graffiti of the Indus-Hunza road to China

**Context:** A.H. Dani (1985, 1987, 1989) read Kharoṣṭhī epigraphs on the “sacred rock of Hunza”, north-east of Gilgit, and was sure that they contained the names of Vima Kadphises (allegedly: *maharaja Uvimma Kadhatphrisa*), Kaniṣka (allegedly: [*Gushana*] *devasa maharajasa* (...) *kaniṣkasa*) and Huviṣka (allegedly: *Maharajasa devaputrasa Huvi[ṣkasa]* and *Gushana maharaya Huv[iṣkasa]*). None of these readings could be verified by Neelis (2001: 164, 166 “I.B.K3”, 181 “I.D.K3”). Only in one case is a