

Who Blocked the Nāneghāt? Reflections on Nahapāna, Sandanēs, and the Sātavāhanas

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This paper deals with a number of often-discussed events taking place in the two centuries about the turn of times: a) the consolidation of the Kṣaharāta *kṣatrapa* realm under Nahapāna at Ujjain with its busy harbor station at Broach, b) the attempt at vitiating this Kṣaharāta sea trade preponderance by Sātavāhana engineers expanding the Kalyāna-Nāneghāt-Junnar land connection, c) the blocking of this improved connection by Sandanēs (Σανδανης) in the service of Nahapāna, d) the complete defeat of Nahapāna by the troops of the Sātavāhana king Gotamīputra Sātakaṇṇi and e) the installation of the Kardamaka *kṣatrapa* ruler Caṣṭana at Ujjain. These diverse activities are reinspected through philological studies on numismatic material and made more coherent by showing that the person behind the *hapax* Sandanēs could be none other than Caṣṭana.

The *Periplus maris Erythraei* was written as a handbook for Greek-reading captains sailing between Roman Egypt and the west-coast of India. It lists harbors as destinations, and it lists goods to sell and to buy. It was composed around AD 70. Only in passing, it sheds light on the actual political situation. One such passage is famous, given here in the standard translation of Casson (1989: 18). It describes conditions prevailing in the time of Nahapāna (roughly AD 20–70), the Śaka king of the Kṣaharāta clan, who in his best days ruled parts of Gujarat, Malwa and Maharashtra down to Pune:

“52. The local ports [sc. of Dachinabadēs (*dakṣiṇāpatha*, HF)], lying in a row, are Akabaru, Suppara, and the city of Kalliena; the last, in the time of the elder Saraganos, was a port of trade where everything went according to law. [Sc. It is so no longer] for, after Sandanēs occupied it, there has been much hindrance [sc. to trade]. For the Greek ships that by chance come into these places are brought under guard to Barygaza.”

The local ports mentioned are Akabaru, which is unidentified,¹ and then Sopara, a former island called Śūrpāraka off the northern coast of Bombay, its erstwhile importance apparent through the fragments of Aśokan Rock Edicts found there (Falk 2006: 136–8). Alluvium put an end to its state as an island with harbor long ago and the ground of Salsete can be reached today via the train station of Nala-Sopara. The third harbor mentioned is the modern Kalyāna, which used to be reached by steering east for ca. 50 km into the present Ulhas river just south of the former Sopara island.

The nature of the Nāneghāt

All three harbor sites were connected by trade routes to a range of market centers inland. Palmer (1946) explains the relationship between the passes Sher ghāt, Thal ghāt, Nāne ghāt and Bor ghāt with the starting points at Sopāra and Kalyāna. It is important to note that Thal ghāt and Bor ghāt were favorable for the tracks of the railways from Bombay to Nasik and Pune, while the other two passes were not and consequently lost importance. However, to understand the differences between the possible traffic lines we need to have a closer look at the Nāneghāt (19°17'31"N, 73°40'33." E).

In contrast to the other passes towards Nasik or Pune, the Nāneghāt is not a natural pass. It was man-made by first removing a considerable mass of rock from the top edge of the *ghāt*, in order to sink a sort of gangway into a slowly rising ground in front of the scarp down to the Deccan plain. This artificial gangway is about 200 m long. It rises gently at first and then slopes for the last 50 m down through the rock until it reaches the perpendicular front wall of the *ghāt*. A sort of staircase continues the gangway by following the side wall diagonally and after about 20 m turns down in steep serpentine. Where the slope drops at less than 45° the man-made rock steps give way to the natural soil.

1 Between Sopara and Broach the next known ancient harbor site on the coast north of Sopara is Nargol, mentioned as *nānaṃgola* in an inscription of the time at Nasik (Senart 1905/06: 78f.). The text subdivides the *nānaṃgola* area in a number of places, the first one of which is *piṃḍitakāvaḍa*, and *kāvaḍa* could correspond to what the Greek heard and remembered as /akabaru/. For the final /r/ cf. Larikē in Ptolemy with its Indian counterpart Lāṭa, or Saraganos in the *Periplus* for Sātakaṇṇi; for the readings cf. Boyer (1897: 136, fn.).

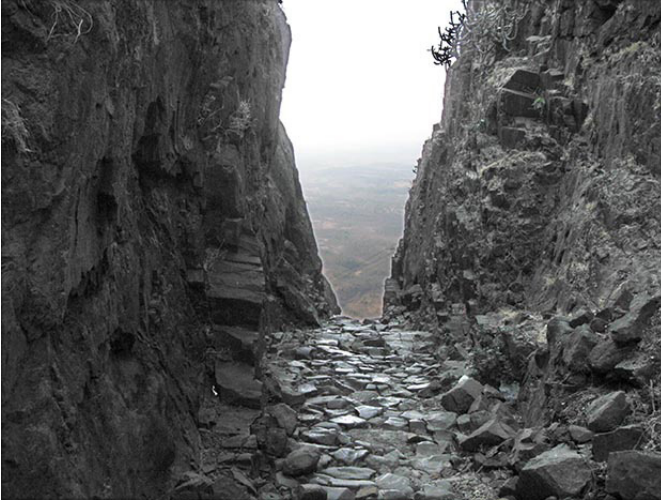


Fig. 1: View west through the man-made cut of the Nāneghāt. The inscribed cave follows on the left

This gangway changed the ancient traffic routes up and down the Western ghāṭs dramatically. It also changed the role of Junnar on the Deccan plateau from a station on a north-south running highway to one of the head-quarters on the Deccan seeing much of the east-west oriented commerce crossing it.

The removal of the rocks for the gangway must be seen in the light of the Buddhist caves of the Western Ghats, at Junnar and nearby. Both constructions required stone-masons knowing how to cut free and dispose of masses of heavy colliery wastes. Since the caves start being built around 150 BC and the political reactions to the Nāneghāt construction are documented only for the 1st century AD it is likely that the stone-masons from the caves were used to oversee the hollowing out of the Nāneghāt, with its fundamental gangway, its staircase, and a number of excavated cave rooms and basins by the side of the gangway made for shelter and for the storage of water. In the greatest hall small statues of the Sātavāhana founders were shaped. They were destroyed long ago and the wall-wide inscriptions are preserved only in part. All construction work dates to the late first century BC and early first century AD.

The Nāneghāt cannot be seen without the harbor of Kalyāna and vice-versa. After sailing 50 km inland on the 300 m wide Ulhas river the sailors could buy and sell at Kalyāna, or hand over their goods to their land-bound company men. From this harbor town it takes only 50 km of slowly rising ground to meet the lower end of the Nāneghāt trail, which is still marked on the bottom of a meteoric crater of a diameter of about 400 m by a rectangular

compound 20 × 60 m large (19°17'35"N, 73°40'02"E), with walls high enough to keep away those panthers which could at night be interested in the pegged beasts of burden. At a carved out square space attached to the compound a number of steps mark the beginning of the ascent. From there the path first runs in the open, then enters a light wood that accompanies the path for most of the steepest part to the top, 400 m higher up. This ascent can be done in two hours when the weather is ideal, for the descent one hour suffices.

This artificial pass with its stairs allowed to goods to be transported from the harbor town of Kalyāna up the western Ghat in about three days, while mounted soldiers could ply from Junnar down to Kalyāna in one day. The old alternative was the Bor pass through Lonavla to old Dhanyakāṭa near the Karle caves, or the picturesque but 200 km long and tedious road up to Nasik. Both routes traditionally started from Sopara.

With this long introduction it becomes clear that the Nāneghāt is not just a pass among many but that it posed a serious threat to all traditional trade stations north or south of Junnar. Kalyāna and the Nāneghāt pass were under control of the Sātavāhanas, and the remarkable feat of the construction was documented inside the large square hall carved into the rock at the upper end of the pass. Short inscriptions, still surviving, accompanied the small statues of early family members of the Sātavāhanas, and the wall-filling texts in large letters praised their deeds and their attachment to Vedic sacrifices.

Action to block the Nāneghāt

The above quotation from the *Periplus* presented us with two parties vying with each other, one that had built the pass and another one further away at Broach. The builders were the Sātavāhanas, with Kalyāna as their port. Others led armies in the service of king Nahapāna, who had Broach as his port. At first, “in the time of the elder Saraganos” (ἡ ἐπὶ τῶν Σαραγάνου τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου χρόνων), the trade from Kalyāna to Junnar was in full swing. Our sailor author seems to have experienced these happy times under the “elder Saraganos”, most likely only a few years or a decade earlier.

Who was the “elder Saraganos”? It is customary to take this Greek spelling as a distorted form of the Indic Sātakaṇṇi, a common name with the early Sātavāhana rulers. In the times of our captain it seems that a never-so-named “younger Saraganos” was head of the Sātavāhanas, who may have reigned anywhere but not at Kalyan. The most probable candidate for this *younger Saraganos is Gautamīputra Sātakaṇṇi. Of this Sātavāhana king we know that soon

after the *Periplus* was written he put an end to the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapas under Nahapāna at Broach. Whether or not this younger Sātakaṇṇi also reclaimed Kalyāna we do not know.

Since Broach was still seat of a powerful ruler when the *Periplus* was written, we can expect the years immediately before AD 70 to have been the time when the Nāneghāt was blocked. Nasik and Junnar were still held by Nahapāna, but the Sātavāhanas had already taken Ujjain and prepared for a final blow against the positions of Nahapāna held at Junnar, Kalyan and Broach.²

The identity of the “elder Sātakaṇṇi” is contested; in any case there are lots of coin types found issued by a Sātakaṇṇi usually prefixed by *siri* (Skt. *śrī*), with or without matronym (*kochiputa*, Skt. *kautsīputra*, *kosikiputa*, Skt. *kauśīkīputra*), sufficient for two or more persons of the same name *sātakaṇṇi*.³

The *Periplus* is just one of two early texts which throw some light on actual historical geography. The other one is Ptolemy’s, who finished his *Geography* about 50 years later, but drew on older reports as well. The *Periplus* tells us that goods from a number of places on the Deccan are brought into Broach, not just on Greek ships, but also by carts from Paithan and Ter, 20 and 30 days on the road (*Periplus* § 51). After Nahapāna had finally lost the war, his life and realm, the Nāneghāt route could have been reopened by the Sātavāhanas. But strange enough, Kalyāna does not occur as a harbor in Ptolemy. Semyla, the modern Chaul just south of Bombay, seems to have been chosen to replace Kalyān during the times of war before.

Ptolemy (*Geo.* 7.1.82) adds another stone to our mosaic: he copies a list of places which describes a road from southern India starting at Manipali, leading through Sarisabis, Ter, Paithan and Deopolli, then Gamaliba, to end finally

2 We cannot be sure that this final blow was purely a matter of weapons. Often the second Tantra of the *Pañcatantra* is linked to this situation, telling us how two arch enemies keep on fighting each other, depicted as crows and owls, one party winning by day, the other by night, until one crow minister feigns to have been mistreated, is accepted in the capital of the owls and opens the doors while his hosts are sleeping.

3 Bhandare takes the “elder Saraganos” to be one *siva siri sātakaṇṇi*, on other issues likewise called a *gautamīputra* (Rapson 1908: 29), known only from coins, unless the king Śivasvāti of the otherwise chaotic Purāṇic lists (cf. *ViṣṇuP* 4.24,43–50; *MatsyaP* 273,1–16) hides behind this name. This is quite likely as one *sivasātakaṇi* overstruck coins of Nahapāna (Bhandare 2006: 88, figs. 6, 7) and because the Purāṇas agree in the sequence Śivasvāti (on coins: *sivasātakaṇṇi*) → Gautamīputra or Gomatīputra (*gotamīputra sātakaṇṇi*) → Puloma or *’limān* (*puḷumāvi*). Since the rather rare *sivasātakaṇṇi* also calls himself, rarely too, *sivasirisātakaṇṇi* on his coins he may as well hide behind the simple and much more frequent *sirisātakaṇṇi*.

at Omenogara. All these places are “west of the Byda river”, that is in our coordinates the land north of the rivers which unite for the Ulhas river near Kalyāna. This Byda touches at its sources those of the otherwise unknown “Nanaguna” river which flows in the opposite direction, north-east on Ptolemy’s map, due east on ours. Name and position show that Omenogara is the old Yavananagara, modern Junnar, something that was already seen by Bakhle (1926: 145). Judging from the distances the first two places called Manippali and Sarisabis are found in the positions of modern Maski and Sannati. These are two business places known from Aśokan times, with Sannati in addition being an important place for the Sātavāhanas already in the 16th regnal year of the founder Chimuka (von Hinüber 2014: 29). Rivers are often named after the place they come from or head to, and so Ptolemy should not be blamed for turning two passes into a river name, as the Nanaguna river really originates where the Nāne pass descends, with the Guna pass (Gunya Ghat on Google Earth) just 250 m further south-east.⁴ So we learn from Ptolemy that the passes carried the same names already in his time; but we can also tell from his silence that Kalyāna had become a momentarily irrelevant place. Junnar is nicely situated in a fertile landscape, also on the old north-south oriented road, and can do without a Nāneghāt in full swing, but Kalyāna for some time kept being cut off from international trade. Sopara will have survived, but the Sātavāhana business had shifted slightly south from Bombay and with the Greek and Arab sailors acquainted with the new destination – and others even further south – any shift back would not have been profitable.

Nahapāna and Mambanos: Trilingual philology

The short report cited from the *Periplus* presented two recognizable parties, Sātavāhanas and the king in Broach, unnamed, whose name is found mentioned in another chapter of the same *Periplus* under the spelling (gen.) Μαμβανου. In older editions a variant Μαμβαρου is found, possibly derived from Schwanbeck (1850: 508) and Fabricius 1883, although reconstructed already by Müller (1855: CXLIV) with the manuscript, as Boyer has seen. For a long time the identity of *nahapāna* and *mambanos* was disputed. First proposed by Boyer (1897: 136) with many examples for the required sound

4 The Gunya pass could have been in use before the Nāneghāt was cut into the mountain by the side of it. It is ascendable only for pedestrians. With its deep artificial foot holes it would also be risky for descent. After the Nāne pass was cut into the rock, nobody would have thought of using this narrow and dangerous ladder.

changes (137), the equation was rejected from Kennedy (1918: 113) up to Sircar in 1966. Reserve characterized the critical examination by Fussman (1991: 32f.). Dozens of supporters of an identity and the same number of skeptics could be cited. Doubts were finally removed when Bhandare (2007) published a coin showing the well-known head of Nahapāna with a legend surrounding it speaking of *basileos nabanou*, while the Prakrit legends in two scripts on the reverse reads the traditional (Br.) *nahapāna* and (Khar.) *nahapa*.⁵ The identity is thus proven beyond reasonable doubt.

But the case is not so simple. While Bhandare had just one coin at his disposal there are now a number more, thanks to the untiring efforts of Alex Fishman (forthc. A), who is about to produce a further catalog of the Kardamaka kṣatrapas, starting with their local predecessors.⁶

As said, the standard silver coins of Nahapāna can be separated in two major groups, one, voluminous, reading NAHAPANACA and another one, very rare, reading NABANOY. A closer look reveals that the two forms of the same name belong to different worlds. Bhandare (2007: 34a) considers whether a Greek legend should be earlier than a “hybrid Graeco-Roman” one, but finds that the Kharoṣṭhī part on the back side is missing one syllable in *nahapasa* and thus tends to place these rare pieces in the middle of Nahapāna’s reign.

I prefer to see the Greek version as the oldest one and describe, without discussing possible alternatives, how I see the two versions evolve:

The first of the two series under discussion presents its text in two languages and three scripts: The Greek obverse reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟC ΧΑΡΑ/ΔΟΥ ΝΑΒΑΝΟΥ, “of the king, the *kṣaharāta*, Nahapāna.”⁷ Many dies were used but the spellings are rather uniform. Where we expect a *kṣa* for *kṣaharāta* we see the cross of a Greek *chi* (χ, X). This we know well from the name of the contemporaneous king Kharahostes on his coins issued in Gandhara, (dat.) ΧΑΡΑΗΟCΤΕΙ. The same name is found on the Mathura Lion Capital written in Kharoṣṭhī where it spells *kharaosta*. This shows that the sound behind both forms written as a *chi* (X) should be a voiceless velar fricative, IPA [x], as in German *ach* or Swiss Alemannic *Chuchi* (Küche, kitchen).

5 Without knowledge of Bhandare’s paper Fishman and Severin (2018) presented further pieces.

6 The new catalog is a revised edition of his 2013 catalog, which is generally inaccessible. A glimpse is possible through his contributions to chapter 17 in Pieper 2021 (540–576).

7 This is Fishman type 3.2, which was misread at least in the first edition.



Fig. 2: First or Greek edition, reading BACIAEOC XAPA/ΔΟΥ NABANOY on the obverse (CNGal 27, 41; CNGal 24, 593) and *raño kṣaḥaratasa nahapa(na)sa* on the reverse.

The backside reads an unproblematic *rajño kṣaḥarātasa nahapanasa* in Brāhmī on one side and *raño kṣaḥaratasa nahapasa* in Kharoṣṭhī on the other. This latter writing is not of “crude and inferior execution” (Bhandare 2007: 34a) but shows that the legend was designed by someone who had an unusual knowledge of *śaka* phonology. The letter written *ḥa* in the above transliteration is a clear formal *ha*, but with a special diacritical cross-bar, not found in the *ha* of *nahapasa*, and to my knowledge not found anywhere else. For this legend-designer *ha* and *ḥa* were different sounds. We can guess that the *ḥa* sounded somehow stronger, different but close to a Greek *chi* (χ), but not identical, as that letter was already needed for the initial velar. I propose to consider the [ɣ], the voiced velar fricative written *gh* in “Afghanistan” or written *ğ* in Turk. Once we imagine a pronunciation *xayarāta* with two velar fricatives we instantly recall the spelling of the Sātavāhana king Gotamīputra Sātakaṇṇi who boasted to have killed all *khakharāta* (Mirashi 1981: 45:6), where neither *kha* was an aspirated velar plosive, but both were similarly sounding velar fricatives. The two similar sounds appear merged into one for the βασιλεος χαραδου ναβανου legend on this first or “Nambanos” editions of Nahapāna. We will meet with even more effects of the sound transcribed *ḥa* below.

This first edition spoke to the locals in Prakrit, written in Brāhmī, without flaws. It also addressed the Śakas in town, known to read Kharoṣṭhī and certainly instantly aware of what the diacritical bar inside the *ha* was to represent. The obverse spoke to the Greek in town in Sailor Greek, obviously on purpose, that means, the condensed (gen.) χαραδου was good enough for *kṣaharātasa*, and (gen.) ναβανου or, in rare cases, ναμβανου good enough for *nahapānasa*. This way all could be happy, but the king. Who with the name of Nahapāna from the hoary clan of the Kṣaharātas would love to read and hear his name and title as Nambana, the Xarada? And every sailor speaking of Nambana the Xarada could point to the king's own coinage to justify this sort of blasphemy.

The way out included a complete reminting of the silvers, a gradual withdrawal of the first edition, and it required a remarkable intellectual step: If these Greek-reading sailors cannot speak properly the local language then the king will wrap the correct local Prakrit in Greek letters. After the Aśokan text at Kandahar III (Falk 2006: 246) this is the second early example of a phonetic rendering of one Indic language in a non-Indic script. The intended form was: ραννω ξα'αρατασα να'απανασα.

So far the theory. For the celators – and there were several working independently – it was not so easy to design this Greek legend. The main problem was how to express the /h/. Standard Greek used an /h/, but it would not be written. India was not the only country in late and post-Hellenism with a phonemic /h/ in its local language and so there were quite a number of letters designed, called *hēta*, for expressing an /h/. One type was the traditional *ēta*, Η, associated with Herakles or Helios. At about the same time Kharahostes in the Panjab and Gandhara used this Η for his name in the dative: ΧΑΡΑΗΟCΤΕΙ. Another form is linked with Delphi, in the shape of the classical Phoenician 𐤇, an Η closed all around, which occurs on Nahapāna coins in the shape of 𐤇. Still another form looks like an 𐤇. By now it should be clear that the statement of Jha and Rajgor (cited in Bhandare 2007: 33b) about “Σ becoming I, Η becoming B and N written as 𐤇” is a misunderstanding in all cases, since B is no *ēta* “H” but the 𐤇-shaped *hēta*, and 𐤇 is no “N” but just another *hēta*.

But most important is that “I” is no I, but a *xi*, pronounced /ks/ as in ‘Alexander’, used to render the Śaka *kṣ*. This letter must have been an enigma also to some celators around Nahapāna, since often it is written as a Z, so that a *zēta* seems to have been intended. In other cases the letter is written as an unmistakable *sigma* Σ, although *sigma*'s younger form C renders /s/ for all genitive endings on the same coin. Master (1938) has shown that in all cases a

xi would have been correct although it has “appropriated a usual form of *zeta*”. We can modify this statement by saying that *xi* is correct, as it was written, but it came in an unusual form which was not understood everywhere although it was maintained for most of the editions.

The unusual form **I** of the *xi* is, however, not unique. There are legends on coins from Alexander’s lifetime and later where the *xi* in Αλεξανδρου is written just as by Nahapāna, the **I** simplified from an intermediate form that adds the vertical to connect all three horizontal lines (cf. Leu w18, 584). This *xi* ξ **I** of the improved second design served as /ks/ for the /kʃ/ of *kṣaharāta*. It is clearly different from the *chi* χ which stood in its place in the first design, because that *chi* recorded the local and Sailor Greek pronunciation of Prakrit *kha(k)harāta*, just as in the dative ΧΑΡΑΗΟΣΤΕΙ it corresponded to the *kha* of the local *pra kharahostasa*.

Under these premises the Greek-letter Prakrit is neither garbled nor degraded but even more interesting in that it shows that the clerks had the duty to design a legend that took care of the /h/ wherever necessary and in an array of shades. There are several solutions which spring to the eye:⁸



Fig. 3: H for /h/ in Ξαηαρατας (CNGal 19, 77); Θ for /h/ in Ξαηααδον (?) (Todywalla 96, 6); Π for /h/ in Σαηα (Obolos 19, 495); ΗΘ for /h/ in Ξαηαααδας (Album 39, 2832.).

1. H stands for /h/. Both /h/ are expressed by “H”, while *pi* Π renders /p/ (Fishman no. 3.1):

PANNIΩ ΙΑΗΑΡΑΤΑC ΝΑΗΑΠΑ, /ραννιω ξα'αρατας να'απα/

⁸ A full list, far exceeding the scope of the present paper, is found in Fishman Forthc. A

2a. Ϟ = Ϟ stands for /h/. This designer also used a Latin P for the /p/ in Nahapāna:

PANNIΩ ΙΑϞΑΑΑ/ΔCC NAAPANACC, /ραννω ξαῆαρα/δασσα νααπανασσα

Here, the /h/ in /ksaḥaradassa/ is written as Ϟ, but the /h/ in Nahapanaou is dropped. The celator must have thought that a plain /h/ is dismissable, while a velar fricative is not.

2b. Η or ΗϞ stand for /h/. This is the more frequent variant form of 2a. Again, only the first sound in *ksaḥadassa* (or *ksaḥarassa*) is written, the second is not expressed in writing:

PANNIΩ ΙΑΗϞΑΑΑCCΕΝΑΑΡΝΑΑ·CCC, /ραννω ξαῆαδασσα νααπναασσα/

This group shows the most variant mistakes, but the basic scheme is as above. Often, the final CCE looks like CCC. However, there are a number of clear cases with horizontal bar to be sure that at least one of the C letters is probably meant to be an *epsilon*. As above, the /p/ in Nahapāna is present in its Latin form.

When we compare the first and rare Nambanos series we see that despite the Greek language, there was no sign of a *hēta* of any form anywhere, not in ΧΑΡΑΔΟΥ for *kṣaharātasa* and not in *nabanou* or *nambanou* for *nahapānasa*. When we compare the rare first or *basileos*-type we see that there is no such variance and nothing but the unmistakable *chi* (X) was used.

That means all in all that the (currently) rare type was written in the Greek language, but with less care for the difficult Greek letters, while its Kharoṣṭhī side displays a good knowledge of Northern or Śaka phonetics. This makes me think of a northerner from Gandhara with good knowledge of Greek for the first and now rare type, while the frequent standard type with its diverse *hēta* renderings rather suggests Greek or western clerks only little acquainted with Prakrit.

These linguistic intricacies add little to the political history of Nahapāna. However, they will be important when we compare the successors to Nahapāna, Horumujāta and Caṣṭana. The change from Sailor Greek to a Prakritic legend in Greek script is important for understanding that “Nambana” is not what Nahapāna wanted to hear. It was a colloquial Greek distortion and as such it is in its proper place on the ship of our *Periplus* captain, even in a

further deteriorated form “Mambana”.⁹ An ordinary Indian citizen at Ujjain need not be suspected to have called his king Nambana.

Sandanēs

Returning to the quotation from Ptolemy dealing with the blockage of the Kalyāna harbor. There is one Sandanēs who blocked the Kalyāna-Junnar shortcut route. The name Sandanēs was used on the ship of our captain, and thus could be a Sailor Greek expression as well.

From inscriptions at Junnar we know that Nahapāna’s son-in-law Usabhadāta, Skt. *ṛṣabhadatta*, had occupied Nasik and Junnar. The two actions make a perfect pair: Usabhadāta took the Deccan route, while Sandanēs closed the most important Konkan harbor. For Usabhadāta we have relative dates, since he issued some rock inscriptions at Nasik and Junnar in the (*yavana*) years 41 to 45, which we equate with AD 63 to 67 for a certain reason explicated below. During the same phase Sandanēs kept the Kalyāna-Nāneghāt route closed, an assumption which is in line with the extra-Indian chronologies for the *Periplus*.

The concerted action on the Deccan and in the Konkan aimed at the two final points of the pass and thus disrupted trade on the Nāneghāt route completely. In addition the ships which – based on the experience of preceding years under the “elder Saraganos” – sailed into the present Ulhas river, the Bindas of Ptolemy, for Kalyāna were sent under guard to Broach, to unload at the main harbor town of Nahapāna.

So far the story is well-known,¹⁰ with just one obscurity left: who is Sandanēs?

9 The *Periplus* manuscript reads Μαμβανου. Although in some hands M and N can easily be mistaken for each other, the examples of Fig. 2a, c, shows that on the first or Greek series the crucial letter often has the shape of an H, which can be seen as a *my* in many places and may have led our captain to believe that Mabanos was the correct pronunciation.

10 There is one voice of fervent and total opposition from Casson (1983) who guessed that it was not Nahapāna who closed the Nāneghāt, but the Sātavāhanas themselves, while Nahapāna is said to have had it built, despite all Sātavāhana statues and epigraphs in the reception hall. Only Bhandare (1999: 261) thought that this interpretation, against all philology, was “excellent”. In any case this idea seems to be based on an attempt at identifying Sandanēs with a Sātavāhana called Sunandana who is listed without further detail in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa, named Sundara in the Matsya-, Brāhmāṇḍa- and Viṣṇupurāṇas, and is nonetheless labeled a “viceroy” by Bhandare (2006: 86b) and a “weakling” by Mitra Shastri (2011: 36).

Since the *Periplus* does not qualify Sandanēs in any way, its author seems to have thought that this figure is sufficiently known. Most scholars are content with calling Sandanēs “unknown”. Earlier, Fabricius in his edition (1883: 149) simply substituted Sanabarēs for Sandanēs and even for Nambanos, and could so replace an unknown by a known Śaka ruler from Sindh. In a similar vein, John Marshall (1951, I: 60 with fn. 7), considered Sandanēs to be “corrupted from Sapedanes”, a ruler in the Gondophares line, who in fact was active in the time of the *Periplus* (cf. Cribb 2018: 17, table IV). Sarpedanēs spells his own name *sarpedana* in the Kharoṣṭhī legends of his coinage (CNG 75, 671), but was never active in the Konkan, and so this proposal was almost universally ignored.¹¹

Earlier than Marshall, S. Lévi (1936) had tried to see the Kushan king Kaniṣka I behind Sandanēs, an attempt that today would be dismissed for chronological reasons alone, but Lévi’s approach has a more serious basis because he regarded *sandanēs* as a Greek attempt at rendering Skt. *candana* (1936: 76).¹² He pointed at the commentary by Sengzhaō 僧肇 on Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Sūtrālaṅkāra*, where the commentator replaced Kumārajīva’s *candana* (*zhan tan* 梅檀), epithet of Kaniṣka, by “king of the Yuezhi” (月氏王, 1936: 80f.), and on this basis Lévi concluded not unreasonably that Kaniṣka was called *candana*, whatever that meant, apart from the standard meaning “sandal wood”. Lévi’s paper makes hard reading and for long stretches leads nowhere, also when he bases this proposal on the fact that Tāranātha speaks in one chapter about Kaniṣka and in the next about the otherwise unknown Candana-pāla, who is presented as the lord of Aparānta, the Konkan, taking us back to the realm of Nahapāna where Kaniṣka never was.

The Tibetan author Tāranātha lived late, in the 16th century, but is known to have used age-old Buddhist historical information. The succession of topics in his book, first Kaniṣka, then Candana-pāla, need not mean anything, but a Candana-pāla in Aparānta is remarkable, as Aparānta is the Konkan, which was brought by our enigmatic Sandanēs under the sway of Nahapāna. This Candanapāla of the Konkan is said in Tāranātha fol. 35B to be a contemporary of the king of Oḍiviśa, which should be the country (*viśaya*) of the Oḍi-rājas in Swat, who were in fact ruling in the first century AD, along with

11 Chattopadhyaya (1958: 66), who objected against Marshall (1951), took Sandanēs for “a later Sātavāhana prince”.

12 Similarly, Kennedy (1918: 110) expected an Indian Candaka, “a subordinate chief, and a vassal of the king of Barygaza”.

the Kushan ruler Kujula Kadphises, as becomes clear from the Senavarma reliquary inscription. In the same reliquary text this king Senavarma speaks of himself as “I, the *kadama*”, which was left untranslated by von Hinüber (2003: 13) and still by Baums (2012: 229), but can be taken as *kardama*, as was proposed first by Salomon (2003: 58, fn. 9), based now in addition on the frequency of this ethnic term in Gandharan *avadānas* dating to the same period. If the Oḍi-rāja Senavarma calls himself a *ka(r)dama(ka)*, the linkage made by Tāranātha between this region and Candana-pāla down south in Aparānta appears less arbitrary, since we do have a Kardamaka in Aparānta, and that is Caṣṭana, best known as a successor of Nahapāna.

Could it be that this Caṣṭana hides behind the frequent *candana*? Lévi (1936: 84) had linked Sandanēs with *candana* and the latter with Kaniṣka. Thomas (1944: 95) supported the idea. But as Candana, Caṣṭana must also have had a certain reputation in Buddhist circles, as he occurs under his very name in an Uighur *avadāna* collection with roots in Kushan times, originally composed in the Tocharian B language (see below p. 224).

It is clear that a colloquial *candana* for Caṣṭana or a similarly based term would automatically be turned into *sandana* by the Greek speaking populace in Broach, and given the most common name-ending *-ēs* to create just this name Sandanēs as it is used in the *Periplus*. From Caṣṭana to the Indian *candana* is no great jump, only the change from *ṣṭ* to *nd* looking like an obstacle. However, a look at the Kharoṣṭhī spellings can help, as on Caṣṭana’s own coinage his name is written *caṭhana* (Rapson 1908: 74), but, with a further stroke to the right, also *caṭana* (Rapson 1908: 74, 75). In the first case nothing is won as *ṭha* is used in Kharoṣṭhī script apart from /ṭha/ also to render /ṣṭa/. The second spelling makes a true difference, as *caṭana* could render **caṭṭana*, and then any trace of a sibilant had disappeared. A Khar. character *ṭha* differs from *ṭa* in that the latter in addition to the top serif has a small horizontal stroke to the right as well. The rare pieces legible in this part allow both deductions, but the *ṭha* forms are certainly prevalent. That means that Brāhmī *caṣṭana* may have led to a popular *caṭṭhana*, which is reflected in some of the Kharoṣṭhī legends reading *caṭana*, which would provide a base both for *candana* in neighboring Prakrit speaking areas and for *sandana* with the Greek sailors in town. The Greek script legend on the silver coins follows the second type of Nahapāna in that it makes the foreigners reading Greek pronounce the king’s name properly, not with any sort of Sailer Greek distortion. These obverse sides read, in the wake of Nahapāna, ΠΑΝΝΙΩ ΙΑΤΡΑΙΑΚ ΤΑΚΤΑΝΑΚ, “of the

king, the Kṣatrapa, Tastana.” In not a single case seen so far by me did the name start with τ , as might be expected in the light of (Οζηνη βασιλειου) $\tau\iota\alpha\sigma\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\upsilon$ as found in Ptolemy (*Geo.* 7.1.63). An Indic initial c - may well turn to s -¹³ or to ti -¹⁴ in Greek. From the coins’ legend we see which of the possible solutions was the one that Caṣṭana preferred.

The parallel with Nahapāna’s types makes it again clear that \mathbf{I} must be ξ , standard form Ξ , since this \mathbf{I} is used for *kṣatrapa* (Caṣṭana) and for *kṣaharāta* (Nahapāna), where in both cases a $z\bar{e}ta$ would be linguistically inappropriate. Unfortunately, no term used by Caṣṭana includes a $/h/$ or a $/\chi/$, so that the clerical acquaintance with \mathbf{H} or θ remains uncertain.

Chronology

Caṣṭana¹⁵ was long ago recognized as younger than Nahapāna. In his time fell the introduction of the Śaka era of AD 78 and this era was explicitly linked to his name when, e.g., in Rudradāman’s time the Andau inscriptions start with *rāño cāṣṭanasa ysamotikaputrasa rāño rudradāmasa varṣe dvipaṃcāse* 52 and similar. That means, a certain year number is linked to the founder and to the present ruler at the same time. Here, with the descendants of Caṣṭana, we meet for the first time in India the habit of maintaining an era linked with its founder and at the same time mentioning the running year of a succeeding ruler. For the era of Azes only the “bygone Azes” cum year was mentioned, not the actual ruler, in contrast to the following Kushan era where we only get the year number, without founder, but with the present ruler. In the date formula quoted above we hear of *cāṣṭana*’s year as being also the year of the present ruler, Rudradāman, who is his grand-son, active many years after Caṣṭana’s time: “In the year 52 of Caṣṭana, (the founder, and) of Rudradāman (in power).”

13 Cf. the Sandrakottos of Megasthenes, rendering *candragupta*, or the river Sandabalī, Skt *candrabhāgā*, the river Chenab in Ptolemy (*Geo.* 7.1).1 Slightly different is the case of the *prācyas*, the peoples of the East, occurring as *prasioi* in Megasthenes.

14 Cf. Cakora, a place in the possession of Gautamīputra, rendered $\tau\iota\alpha\gamma\omicron\upsilon\pi\alpha$ in Ptolemy (7.1.63, v.1. $\tau\iota\alpha\tau\omicron\upsilon\pi\alpha$), identified by Lévi (1936: 65), and again by Vogel (1952: 79, fn. 3).

15 The Andau inscriptions (Mirashi 1981: 118ff.) all spell his name *cāṣṭana*. The sibilant would disappear in a Prakrit form *caṣṭana*, as found on the coins in Khar. *caṣṭanasa*, the vowel length could survive in **cāṣṭana*, or could alternatively turn into a nasal in **caṣṭana*. Ptolemy describes a stretch of Konkan starting with Sopara, which he calls Αριακε σαδανων , “(follows) Ariake held by the people of Sadanēs.” This Σαδανων was early (e.g. Lévi 1936: 75) linked to **Σαδανης*, our Sandanēs, a form of the name without the nasal. If the terms are really related the statement would presuppose source information from a time prior to AD 78, when Sandanēs still held parts of the Konkan.

In Azes manner, such a year could have been labelled “year of the bygone Caṣṭana,” but, as in the cases of the Azes era, not everybody thought that such a clarification was necessary.

Surprisingly many modern authors interpret this formula as referring to the contemporaneity of the two persons, thus dating this text and also Caṣṭana to AD $78+52=130$.¹⁶ The method of the early Kardamakās was copied 50 years later by the Kushans, where Kaniṣka started the era in AD 127 with a running year 1 and all succeeding kings dated their texts inside that era, so that year 99 of Vāsudeva is not Vāsudeva’s 99th regnal year, but the 99th running year since Kaniṣka had the era installed. The drawback of this method for us is that we do not exactly know when a succeeding king came to power. We only know that it must be somewhere in between the last date preserved in an inscription of one king and the first date preserved of his successor. In any case we know that this era of Caṣṭana, called the *śaka* era, started on April 1, AD 78, because on that day the new year started not only with sun and moon rising conjointly in 0° Aries, the classical definition of the New Year day, but with them was Jupiter as well (Falk 2001: 132f.) making this rare constellation particularly auspicious. The Śaka era was the first Indian era we see as being based on a stellar constellation. It can be used by astronomers for their calculations, and it still serves this purpose well. In contrast to the Kushan era, the Caṣṭana era started with zero, while Kaniṣka had his years start with 1 as a current year.

Was it Caṣṭana who invented an astronomically useful era as such? I have shown that there is an older era built on the same principle of sun and moon standing in 0° Aries, linked to the name of a “*yavana*” that is a “foreign and western” King Sphujiddhvaja who is made responsible for the astronomical calculations in the book called *Yavanajātaka*. This era started on 21 March AD 22 (Falk 2001: 124). On the other hand we have Nahapāna who towards the end of his life dates his inscriptions in an era that must have started around AD 20, and I have repeatedly pointed at the simple solution to make Nahapāna responsible for the introduction of Sphujiddhvaja’s era,¹⁷ or, if he did not support its introduction, he at least seems to have made use of it for the chronology of his

16 Frequently, this is not understood and the two names are interpreted as the result of a co-rule of Caṣṭana and his grandson Rudradāman in the year śaka 52, so that Caṣṭana is said to rule in AD 130 (e.g. Pai 1942: 321, Sircar 1966: 244, Eggermont 1966: 264).

17 The name denotes “who shows Venus in his arms.” The symbols found on the coins of Nahapāna are thunderbolt and arrow, the first pointing at Zeus, the second at Artemis, represented by Jupiter and Venus among the planets. Caṣṭana follows Horumujāta (see below) who had switched to Sun and Moon as personal emblems. Thus, Nahapāna with a symbol of

own late years. The ethnic background behind the *yavana* person called Sphujiddhvaja starting in AD 22 and the *śaka* Caṣṭana starting in AD 78 is in so far akin as both sprang up from foreign families, naturalized to some extent. The region of use is identical, around Ujjain, and the time is separated by only half a century. The idea mentioned above of keeping an era running, must be linked to its astronomical background, which allows astronomers to instantly define the position of a planet, past and future, without first converting the starting position from another era.

It would mean to expect too much to have Nahapāna mount the throne at this starting date of Sphujiddhvaja in AD 22, but either his birth or his royal inauguration and the start of the era of the *Yavanajātaka* cannot be far from each other.¹⁸ In the optimal case Nahapāna is linked to the start in AD 22 and Caṣṭana to AD 78, two dates 56 completed years apart. Caṣṭana could have been born around AD 40, serving as an expedition leader around AD 65 when Nahapāna enjoyed his last years. In AD 70/71 the *Periplus* knew that Ujjain as Nahapāna's capital had been lost, as we know: to the Sātavāhanas. Eight years later Caṣṭana installed the Śaka era, and we can suppose that in the meantime Nahapāna had come to his end. Some 30 odd years later, at around AD 100, Caṣṭana was succeeded by his brother Dāmazāda and his son Jayadāman, – and then only did Rudradāman follow too and rule in and around AD 130.

So far, for the chronological side of the attempted equation of Sandanēs and Caṣṭana there is nothing unlikely, as long as we do not expect Caṣṭana to rule side by side with this grandson Rudradāman in *śaka* 52 = AD 130.



Fig. 4: Silver type of Horamujata with the recognizable letters on the two reverse sides redrawn: (above, Br.) *horamujātasa*, (Khar.) */// jatasa*; (left, Khar.) *khaharatasa horamujatasa*.

Venus “in his arms” could well hide behind *sphujiddhvaja*, but the same applies to his father Bhumaka, with the same thunderbolt and arrow, in addition to which he reveres the Indian couple of Saṃkarṣana and Vāsudeva.

18 Cribb (2018: 16) quite in line with our surmise expects a regnal period of AD 40 to 78.

The time between Nahapāna and Caṣṭana

We knew that Caṣṭana followed as king after Nahapāna had left the stage. Caṣṭana may not have been the sole candidate to rule the former Kṣaharāta dominion. There are a few coins vaguely copying Nahapāna's style, which seem to indicate a transition in stages.

The crucial type is so far unknown to Indological histories of the Western Kṣatrapas. It shows a head resembling the one of Nahapāna on the obverse, but the reverse emblems are different, not thunderbolt and arrow, but just sun and moon. There are only two pieces of these coins made public so far, and the best independent reading is by Alex Fishman in a book on the Kṣatrapa coins in press.

He reads *rajño kṣaharatasa horumujātasa*, which is justified. Although different from Nahapāna, this Horamujāta still calls himself a *kṣaharāta* king. He changes the arms of Nahapāna – thunderbolt and arrow – on the reverse side to sun and moon, a change that will be continued by his non-*kṣaharāta* successor Caṣṭana. In his name, the *-jāta* renders Ir. *zād*, “born to, son of, born on the day dedicated to”, found unmistakably written in Brāhmī as *ysāda* in the name of Dāmayzāda, a close descendant of Caṣṭana living in the second century. Fishman explained the full *horumujāta* as an Indian form of the Iranian Hormuzd, itself derived from Ahura mazda. I agree with the first part, but take the full name as the Indian Prakrit rendering of *Ohrmazdzād, “Born to Ohrmazd” or “born on the day of Ohrmazd”, parallel to Mihrzād, Bactrian Μυροζαδο (Sims-Williams 2010: 87, no. 250), “born as a child of Mithra”, or “born on the day of Mithra”. An Iranian *Ohrmazdzād would in Indian ears appear to consist of Ohrma plus *jāta*, leading to a hypocoristic but pronouncable Horumu, the name of a deity. This form is attested on a seal from Bactria (Fig. 5). In Kushan Brāhmī script we read *horumu[ya]*, “of Horumu”, with the genitive regularly expressing possession. In the next line of the same seal follows the equivalent in Bactrian script beginning with $\omega\rho o///$. If this truncated word was given a genitive ending, we do not know, Bactrian seals use the nominative. In case the full word read $*\omega\rho o\mu o\upsilon$ some readers might have guessed at a base form $*\omega\rho o\mu o\varsigma$.

In short, I take *horumujāta* as the Indianized form of a compounded Iranian name saying “born (on the day?) of Ahura mazda”.



Fig. 5: Biscrptual sealing in a private collection reading masc. genitive *horumuya* (Of Horumu) in Brāhmī and $\omega\rho\omega$ /// in Bactrian. Courtesy Thanandon Rattanasuk.

The Greek side of the two pieces of Horamujāta cannot be fully read, but the Prakrit starts in Greek letters with $\text{PANNI}\omega\text{IAH}$ ///, Nahapāna style no.1, beginning with *ksaḥaratassa* or similar.¹⁹

Judging from his extremely rare coins, this Horamujāta was king only for a very short time and may have been eliminated in the general extinction campaign against the Kṣaharāta clan led by the Sātavāhanas.

In the next stage Caṣṭana exactly copies the reverse of Horamujāta with sun and moon, replacing the name on the obverse by his own.

After these presently rare types of Caṣṭana which continue on the reverse the arrangement of Horamujāta we next find the various but consistent series of Caṣṭana as a Mahākṣatrapa, where the sun and moon of Horamujāta are supplemented by the moon-on-hill of the Sātavāhanas (cf. Rapson 1908: cxv).

In passing we point at the next step, the successor of or co-ruler with Caṣṭana, his brother Dāmazāda, both at least sharing a father named Zamotika. Silver coins in Dāmazāda's own name exist, but are extremely rare (Pieper 2021: 547, no. 3364). His copper issues are more varied (Pieper 2021: 566f.).

A son of Dāmazāda, and not of Caṣṭana, is Jayadāman who follows his father on the throne.

Caṣṭana, who so far appeared out of the blue, had to his credit that he was no Kṣaharāta and that he may have been in diplomatic exchange with the victorious Sātavāhanas. In case he was the Sandanēs of the *Periplus* a military

¹⁹ The final and decisive H is preserved including fragments of the cross-bar. Missing are parts from the very top. A reading IATP /// is much less likely, particularly in the light of the Brāhmī version on the reverse.

withdrawal from Kalyāna accompanied by peace negotiations could have been the ultima ratio.

That means Caṣṭana was on the finally losing side of the warring parties, but nonetheless the winners treated him with respect, as already Rapson (1908: cxii) saw that “Caṣṭana was appointed by the suzerain power [i.e. the Sātavāhanas HF] to rule over such provinces of the satrapal dominion as remained after the Andhra conquest”. We do not know, but the seemingly generous donation may have required another load of silver coins²⁰ against the typical alliance marriage, leaving Caṣṭana with royal family ties, but broke. In any case, the winner in the wars was Gautamīputra Sātakaṇṇi and only he or his successor would be able to cede parts of the overrun country to someone succeeding Nahapāna.

Kanganhalli

Caṣṭana was active under Nahapāna until around AD 70, but later, certainly long before AD 130 he became the king resident at Ujjain, as Ptolemy let us know (*Geo.* 7.1.63 Ὁζηνῆ βασιλείον Γιαστανοῦ).²¹

From the same source this Greek author will also have learned that a king, likewise named Ptolemy, had his residence at Paithan (*Geo.* 7.1.82 Βαίθανα βασιλείον [Σιρο]-πτολεμαίου).²² We know that Nahapāna lost Ujjain, and likewise we know that in the time of a Sātavāhana named Puḷumāvi this city came into the hands of Caṣṭana. This arises from a line written on the stūpa of Kanganhalli (16°50'08" N, 76°56'04" E, on the Bhīmā river, 60 km south of Gulbarga), where our Puḷumāvi is depicted pouring water into the hands of a second king, and the situation is explained by a line reading *puḷumāvi ajayatasa ujeni deti*, “King Puḷumāvi gives Ujjain to him, who has not won.”

20 The largest hoard was in part overstruck by punches of Gotamīputra, others with the name of princess Nāganikā to be used at her marriage. Many of these Sātavāhana issues were found near Nasik. A second hoard, in part fresh from the mint (Deyell 1984: 115) and thus probably in the possession of the Nahapāna family, was found at Gogha. The site is just south of Bhavnagar, at the western shore of the bay that separates Kathiawar and Broach. It is 10 km north of Hāthab, the ancient Hastakavapra, a head-quarters (*āharaṇī*; cf. Vogel 1952: 84) in Valabhī-times, suggesting that already in Kṣaharāta times the Kathiawar shore was used as a safe haven.

21 Cf. Eggermont 1966: 265, dealing with Ujjain, showed that Ptolemy used two sources. In one (§ 65) Ujjain occurs as *Ozoamis* and in the other (§ 62-63) as *Ozēnē*, “given entirely different degrees of longitude and latitude.”

22 The city of Pratisthāna is again found twice, once as *pratistama* (§64) located 121E, 25N, once *baithana* (§82) located 117E 18°30N.

O. von Hinüber (2014/19: 23f./1463f.) has dealt with this line and suspected that the Sātavāhana returned Ujjain to make peace with a Kṣatrapa, and he guessed at Caṣṭana as the most likely donee. This interpretation can certainly be upheld with one minor addition: Puḷumāvi did not go as a suppliant, but as a winner who had inherited what is now eastern Malwa from his father Gotamīputra Sātakanni, who had subdued the Kṣatrapas prior to AD 78, won their immense silver treasures and used them i.a. to further decorate the sensational stūpa where the scene is now depicted.²³ The reason for this assumption is the term *jayata* (“winner”), turned into its negative *ajayata* (“non-winner”), expressive of the fact that the Sātavāhana king regarded himself as a winner. But why this unusual formulation? O. von Hinüber rightly pointed to the inscription on the *liṅga* at Reh in the Fatehpur District, 100 km west of Kauśāmbī, of uncertain authorship, but more relevant are the coin legends of the Kṣaharātas who use *jayata* as their family motto, starting with the brothers Higaraka and Higataka and their successor Hastadatta in Gandhara (all in Falk 2016), continuing with Abhiraka and Bhumaka in Sindh and Gujarat, and ending with Nahapāna in Malwa. Caṣṭana, who is no Kṣaharāta, comes next in time, but he never uses this catchword, nor does anyone²⁴ of his successors. The fact that he is subsumed, tongue in cheek, under the “non-winning” title seems to show that Caṣṭana fought on the Kṣaharāta side, as we expect Sandanēs to have done.

Depictions of Caṣṭana and further memories

The panel at Kanganhalli shows two kings busy in donating and receiving the city of Ujjain. Both are depicted in a similar way, dressed in Indian summer clothes. The king holding the ewer (Skt. *bhr̥ṅgāra*) is Puḷumāvi, the other one must be Caṣṭana. Neither face looks like a realistic portrait, but we have realistic portraits in plenty, on the coins of the two rulers. Puḷumāvi’s profile looks hardly Indian, while Caṣṭana’s is of a decided “Caucasian” type. A statue found at the Kushan family sanctuary at Maṭ, beyond the river at Mathura, has lost its head, but was marked on the back with a note saying *ṣastanao///*, the initial part of which I take with most scholars as yet another variant spelling of *caṣṭana*. Nobody will have been able to see this note, since its position deep

23 The best depiction is in Poonacha 2011: 418, pl. A and B.

24 Caṣṭana nowhere uses *jayataḥ* on his coins, but there could be one coin of his brother Dāmāzāda where at least A. Fishman expects to read (*jay*)*atakasa* (Pieper 2021: 567, no. 3451) twice. The Kharoṣṭhī side certainly does not show this term, while the Brāhmī legend does, at least according to the eye-copy.

below on the backside of the coat is the least likely place where any possible reader would expect it. Probably after the demolition of the *devakula* in the times of Huviška the statue was marked for repair. If it ever received a new head, probably in plaster, that resembled the named person, we do not know.

There is an eminent literary vestige preserved in far away Central Asia, an *avadāna* that was incorporated into the *Daśakarmapathāvadānamālā*, composed originally in Tocharian B, transposed then into Tocharian A, and finally into the Old Uigur language (Wilkens 2016,I: 9f.), but even in the latest versions written about 900 years after the king was living it still speaks of king Caṣṭana (*čaštane*), ruling Ujjayinī (*učayan*). The story is simple (Wilkens 2016,II: 682-702, Elmali 2018: 96), in that it tells about a plague and the king who suspects all sorts of demons as having concocted it. Caṣṭana never gets tired in defeating these monsters and finally succeeds. The Bodhisattvas Maitreya and Yaśomitra predict that he will become a Buddha. And as an epic hero *čaštane* is venerated to this day (Wilkens 2016,I: 93).

It stands to reason that a figure with such a foreign name, correctly linked to the name of his far away capital, was also on good grounds linked to events which spread his fame. That means the plague will not be just a literary motif for a hero to show his endurance but will have needed to be a real and dreadful plague ravaging in his days. Many plagues had their origins in the East, like the Antonine Plague (AD165–180, 188ff.) that entered the Roman empire from Ktesiphon and/or the South Egyptian harbors,²⁵ while a plague in the period of Caṣṭana (r. ca. AD 78 to 100) would have a counterpart in a terrible contagious sickness in the days of Domitian (r. AD 81–96) which Cassius Dio (*Roman History*, 72.14-15) compared to the effects of the AD 189 Antonine Plague.

This latter pest took its toll in the time of Huviška and we can tell from the deterioration of Huviška's coinage what effects the pandemic had on his economy. In the case that anything similar happened to Caṣṭana, the scarcity of good money under his brother Dāmazāda and son Jayadāman could find a similar explanation.

All in all we can sum up our picture, including also the vague hints, being aware of their nature:

– Caṣṭana appeared in some way related to the Oḍirāja family in Swat, at least in that both belonged to the Kardama Śakas. This is the *candana-pāla* of Tāranātha.

25 According to Cassius Dio (*Roman History*, 76.13) in the year a.u. 953 or AD 200 a pestilence raged in upper Egypt so that Severus could not proceed to Ethiopia.

- In the war between Nahapāna and the Sātavāhanas Caṣṭana led troops intervening on the side of Nahapāna. He took the southern Konkan under control and kept Kalyāna from unloading oversea cargo, a feat that made the Nāneghāt pass useless for large scale commerce. This is the Sandanēs of the *Periplus*.
- Nahapāna needed to revise his coin legends written in Greek letters and the Greek language. The initially used sloppy Greek spellings were removed by reverting to local parlance written in Greek letters.
- A last member of the Kṣaharāta clan was Horumujāta who seems to have kept the throne for a very short time.
- As a non-Kṣaharāta Caṣṭana was acceptable for receiving Malwa when the victorious Sātavāhanas left the regions north of the Narmadā. This is the *ajayata* king mentioned at Kanganhalli.
- In his coin design, Caṣṭana included elements from Nahapāna, Horumujāta and the Sātavāhanas. For the legend in Greek letters on the obverse of his drachms he could build on the insight of Nahapāna and continue to adopt them to the local language from the start and thus escape Sailor Greek distortions of his name,²⁶ of which *sandana* or *candana* would have been the most likely candidates.
- During his reign he may have experienced troubled times, facing a ravaging plague all through his realm. This is the Caṣṭana of the Uighur *avadāna*.

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26 Caṣṭana on the whole does not use real Greek language, but one of his mint masters may have had an old die of Nahapāna reworked for a drachm, preserved so far in a single piece (Marudhar 2, 1058), where the true Greek legend BACILEYC X/// starts at 11°, just as in Nahapāna’s first series. There are series of Caṣṭana where the obverse in Greek letters is completely nonsensical. Above the head most often a XMX reminds one of the original PANNIΘ. Could it be that these were issued postum, edited by his brother Dāmazāda?

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