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FROM CANDRAGUPTA II TO KUMĀRAGUPTA I: STYLES IN THE PATTERNING OF GUPTA COIN DESIGNS

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Suppose that North India's sculptors would have preferred the pink sandstone from Sikri over any other of the sandstones, the white marble from Rajasthan, the greenish lime-stone from Andhra Pradesh or the grey schists from eastern India. In that unlikely case, we could not rely on the stone to tell us whether a Buddha image was made in Mathura, in Sarnath or in Sanchi, especially when such images were no longer near the site of their production. In order to develop a reliable chronology and geography of their production, we would have to rely on style, iconographies, inscriptions (and the palaeography of their scripts) and on recorded provenance of objects. Exactly those criteria are of paramount importance when analyzing the chronology and coherence of gold coins struck for the Gupta kings.

Gupta period styles:

The focus of this paper then is on certain styles of the Gupta period. James Harle, Joanna Williams, Rick Asher and many others have made us aware of certain traits that hail the emergence of the new style – a different rendering of pleats (flat rather than stepped), less massive body shapes, a preference for clinging-clothes, the shaping of eyes with lids partly closed; and intricate, curly hairstyles often taking on the appearance of wigs. Haloes and flat surface bands are given a fine surface finish of intricately curvaceous floral scrolls.

One of the key stylistic features that is said to distinguish Gupta art from that of the previous period is 'the visual unity of the object', and 'the subordination of details previously treated for their own sake to the overall effect'.¹ Joanna Williams has established that a 'true' Gupta style expresses itself visibly and traceably only by the end of the rule of Samudragupta, around AD 370 or so. Most dated works that she discusses and illustrates cannot be older than the reign of Candragupta II. And by the time of his son and successor, Kumāragupta I, around AD 420, 'true' Gupta art has already reached its maturity, so it seems. The Sarnath School, responsible for the hallmark images associated with the Gupta style, started its production only by AD 470 or so, in a period when the imperial Gupta house was rapidly losing control over its dominion and local rulers make themselves more manifest.

Discerning styles in Gupta period gold coins:

Gupta coins carry the label 'Gupta' proudly and justifiably, through their images and titles of the Gupta kings. These *ḍīnāras* were issued from their mints² from the time of Samudragupta around 350 or so until the end of Gupta rule by the early 6th century.³ They run completely

parallel with early and mature Gupta art in Williams' chronology. From a material point of view, this corpus of gold coins is like that virtual corpus of sculpture in Sikri sandstone only. As long as technical analyses of the metallic composition of Gupta gold are so hard to come by, we can deduce lamentably little with certainty from their appearance for either geography or chronology. Unlike heavy sculptures, many coins travel before they are melted down to become new coins or ornaments. And even those coins that were not recycled via the melting pot usually did travel one way or another before they got buried, lost, stashed away or deposited in a *stūpa*. Most Gupta gold coins now in museums and private collections have no recorded provenance stretching back to the place where they were found. For many there may only be data on where they were purchased. And even coins found in hoards may have very different sources of origin. The geographic origin of specific series of Gupta gold coins then is a problematic issue. At times the scripts of the Sanskrit verses and titles on these coins have been studied for their palaeographic features in order to assess where they were made, but nothing definite could be established so far to help us any further.

For all these reasons, in order to make more sense of Gupta coins than we have done so far, the iconography and style of the engravings are of crucial importance. One would expect that this ensured a focus on those aspects, but this has not been the case. In fact, surprisingly little work has been done on defining what characterizes the various coin styles, essentially because nobody managed to bring together a sufficient number of coherent designs with specific features.

The digital age has brought crucial changes, as it is now possible to make baffling enlargements of Gupta coins to an extent never imagined or intended by the engravers and mint masters overseeing the work. We can now enlarge coin imagery to make it virtually as easy as looking at a stone image of two meter tall. What's more, far easier than ever before, one may discern links between engravings and sculptural art, and make sense of their shared iconographies and styles.

Coin auctioneers generally seem to disregard the stylistic exuberance of the Gupta coins that pass through their house, probably because there is no stylistic reference framework to link their description to. I would like to illustrate this by way of a coin auction on January 5, 2011, by Baldwin auctioneers held in New York.⁴ According to the catalogue, the lots numbered 353 to 356 concern coins of Kumāragupta I on horseback. All four coins are described in identical phrases, except for their weight. For instance coin no. 353:

'Kumaragupta I Mahendraditya, c.413-455 A.D. Dinar. AV 8.23 g. Horseman type. Kumaragupta, nimbate, holding bow, riding horse to right. Rev. Sri-Lakshmi, nimbate, seated left on wicker stool, holding noose. BMC XIII-2. Altekari X-14. Very fine \$ 1,000.' And coin no. 355:

'Kumaragupta I Mahendraditya, c.413-455 A.D. Dinar. AV 7.65 g. Horseman type. Kumaragupta, nimbate, holding bow, riding horse to right. Rev. Sri-Lakshmi, nimbate, seated left on wicker stool, holding noose. BMC XIII-2. Altekari X-14. Very fine \$ 1,000.'



Plate 4.1: Horseman Type. Obverse: Kumāragupta on horseback, riding to right. Reverse: Śrī, with lotus (lh), feeding a peacock (rh). Gold *dīnāra*, 8.23 g (127.0 grains), dia. unknown. Baldwin *New York Sale XXV* (5.1.2011), lot 353. DINARA mfn 6177. Photograph courtesy Baldwin.



Plate 4.2: Horseman Type. Obverse: Kumāragupta on horseback, armed with a bow, riding to left. Reverse: Śrī, with lotus (lh), feeding a peacock (rh). Gold *dīnāra*, 7.97 g (123.0 grains), dia. unknown. Baldwin *New York Sale XXV* (5.1.2011), lot 354. DINARA mfn 4630. Photograph courtesy Baldwin.



Plate 4.3: Horseman Type. Obverse: Kumāragupta on horseback, riding to right. Reverse: Śrī holding a diadem fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dīnāra*, 8.11 g (125.2 grains), dia. unknown. Baldwin *New York Sale XXV* (5.1.2011), lot 356. DINARA mfn 6178. Photograph courtesy Baldwin.



Plate 4.5a-b: Archer Type. Obverse: Candragupta II armed with bow and arrow. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lotus, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dīnāra*, 7.78 g (120 grains), dia. 1.80 cm. Indian Museum, Kolkata, Smith 1906:p. 107, no. 35. DINARA mfn 1824. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.

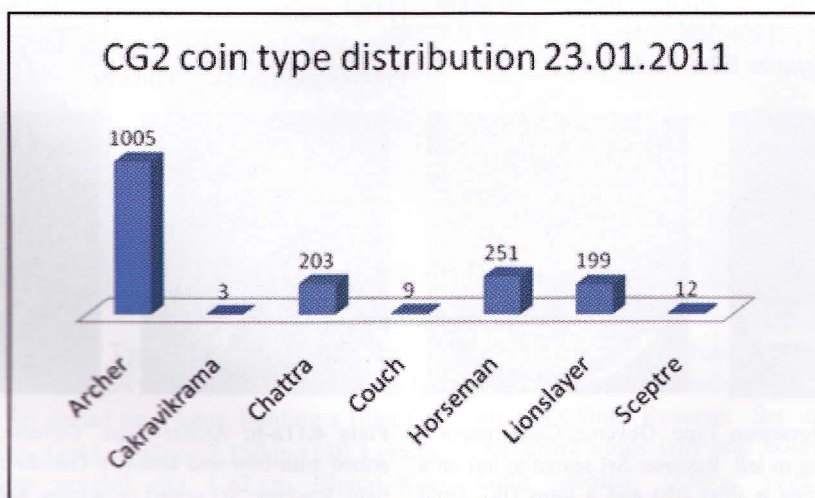


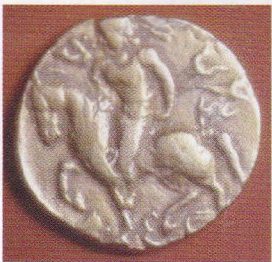
Plate 4. 4: Type distribution among 1682 gold coins of Candragupta II recorded in the DINARA database, as on 23.1.2011.



Plate 4.6a-b: Chattra Type. Obverse: Candragupta II beneath a royal parasol held by an attendant. Reverse: Śrī standing on a lotus, holding a lotus (rh) and a piece of her scarf (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.70 g (118.9 grains), dia. 1.80 cm. Formerly private collection, London. DINARA mfn 55. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.



Plate 4.7a-b: Lion-slayer Type. Obverse: Candragupta II kills a lion. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lion, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.81 g (121.6 grains), dia. 1.96 cm. Indian Museum, Kolkata, Smith 1906:108, no. 42. DINARA mfn 1584. Photograph after Smith 1906: fig. 15.16.



Plates 4.8a-b: Horseman Type. Obverse: Candragupta II on horseback riding to left. Reverse: Śrī seated to left on a wicker stool, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.80 g (120.3 grains), dia. 2.03 cm. Indian Museum Kolkata, Smith 1906:108, no. 41. DINARA mfn 1821. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.



Plates 4.9a-b: Horseman Type. Obverse: Candragupta II on horseback riding to right. Reverse: Śrī seated to left on a wicker stool, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.65 g (118.1 grains), dia. unknown. Baldwin New York Sale XXV (5.1.2011), lot 355. DINARA mfn 4626. Photograph courtesy Baldwin.



Plate 4.10a-b: Horseman Type. Obverse: Candragupta II on horseback riding to left. Reverse: Śrī seated to left on a wicker stool, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.93 g (122.4 grains), dia. unknown. Collection Pankaj Tandon. DINARA mfn 4356. Photograph courtesy Pankaj Tandon.

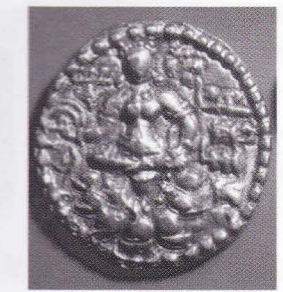


Plate 4.11a-b: Archer Type. Obverse: Candragupta II armed with bow and arrow; a Garuḍa-banner in the left field. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lotus, holding a fillet (rh) and lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 8.055 g (124.3 grains), dia. 2.13 cm. Patna Museum, acc. no. 18580. DINARA mfn 2099. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.

The auctioneers have either ignored or overlooked a considerable number of features that in fact co-define the individuality of each coin series in the entire corpus (**Plates 4.1-4.3**). The most important of these are the different weights and sizes, the varying physical proportions and hairstyles of the king riding the horse, the presence or absence of a weapon in his hand, and details in clothing and ornaments on obverse and reverse. This pattern of differences between coins of the same type (in this case the Horseman Type) is not necessarily a sign of the maturing Gupta art under Kumāragupta I. We can trace this phenomenon back to the first Gupta gold coins struck under Samudragupta. In this paper I wish to focus on the Horseman coins of Candragupta II and his son Kumāragupta I in order to analyze in particular their related designs.



Plate 4.12a-b: Chattra Type. Obverse: Candragupta II beneath a royal parasol held by an attendant. Reverse: Śrī standing to left, scattering coins (rh) and holding a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, Weight and size not on record. Trade. DINARA mfn 18.



Plate 4.13a-b: Lion-slayer Type. Obverse: Candragupta II kills a lion. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lion, scattering coins (rh) and holding a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 8.13 g (125.5 grains), dia. 1.90 cm. Shivlee collection at <http://www.shivlee.com/chandraguptaicoins/ciilionslayercoins.html>. DINARA mfn 1577. Photographs courtesy of The Shivlee Trust.



Plate 4.14a-b: Archer Type. Obverse: Candragupta II armed with bow and arrow; a Garuḍa-banner in the left field. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lotus, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.150 g (110.3 grains, uncommonly low weight), dia. 1.82 cm. Bharat Kala Bhavan, acc. no. 22772, Gupta and Srivastava 1981 no. 83. DINARA mfn 2613. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.



Plate 4.15: Chattra Type. Obverse: Candragupta II beneath a royal parasol held by an attendant. Reverse: Śrī standing to left, scattering coins (rh) and holding a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.86 g (121.2 grains), dia. 1.70 cm. DINARA mfn 65. Photograph courtesy Jan Lingén.

The mature and later designs for Candragupta II:

Horseman coins comprise of 15 % of the coins manufactured under Candragupta II (**Plate 4.4**).⁵ Several styles are quite evident in the engraved scenes on the obverse side of these coins. In one style group, the king stands in a twice-bent stance, his hair cascading down in curls, his muscular body, arms and thighs prominently displayed. He mostly wears only a short loin cloth, and the strong curves of the king's naked body contrast beautifully with the beaded necklace (**Plate 4.5/left**). The engravers have treated us to more designs done in this style, but never before have numismatists bothered to study these design through this coherence. We come across Candragupta II underneath a parasol (**Plate 4.6a**), slaying a lion (**Plate 4.7a**) or riding on horseback (**Plate 4.8a**). The images on the reverses show a similar coherence in style and subtle variations in iconography through changed postures (seated or standing) and seats (a lotus, a lion or a wicker stool, (**Plates 4.5b-4.8b**).

These stylistic and iconographic similarities are backed up by similarities in size and weight of the coins, in the use of geometric symbols, and in the palaeography of the legends on both obverse and reverse. So this is truly a coherent group, comparable to let's say, a Buddha, a Jina and a Viṣṇu image from the same atelier and carved by the same sculptor or team of sculptors in Mathura around 400 A. D. The group exemplifies the mint idiom of a specific mint active in the same period under Candragupta II.

Baldwin's lot no. 355 (**Plate 4.9**) reveals obvious links in style, iconography and weight (7.65 g) to this group, so rather than attributing it to Kumāragupta I, we should assign it to Candragupta II, as is confirmed by the legend *ajitavikrama* on the reverse.

Not all Horseman coins of Candragupta II weigh around 7.8 g, as is evident from another distinctive, and equally attractive, group of designs for slightly larger and heavier coins struck to a standard of either 8.0 g or 8.2 g, depending on the series. The features that immediately draw our attention are the king's copious small curls and the robustness of his build. This group of designs includes coins of Horseman Type (**Plate 4.10**), presented here with a matching Archer coin (**Plate 4.11**). Notice how design elements return in adapted forms, e.g., the curvature of lotus stems, the shape of the lotus flowers, and the relative position of the left hand of the goddess. It rests on her thigh in what seems an awkward posture in the Horseman design. In fact, this posture directly derives from the matching frontal designs for the goddess in related coin devices. Quite striking in the reverse device is the way the fillet held by Śrī makes a double loop. The goddess wears her curly hair in a special, tightly curled hairstyle with a central bun above her forehead. She is high-breasted and broad-hipped. Her posture may vary, from sitting majestically on a lotus or a lion, to standing to left on a lotus.

Occasionally, and only in this group of designs, does she scatter coins with her right hand, as seen both in a Chattra or Parasol Type design (**Plate 4.12b**)⁶ and in an equally rare Lion-slayer design (**Plate 4.13b**). The stance of the king gets more distinctly outthrust, as does that of the goddess on the Chattra coins. These coins always weigh around 8.2 g; the flans are wide and at

times oblongish. The double-curved fillet also persists, as does the use of particular geometric symbols in the top left of the reverse.



Plate 4.16a-b: Horseman Type. Obverse: Candragupta II on horseback riding to left. Reverse: Śrī seated to left on a wicker stool, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.86 g (121.3 grains), dia. unknown. Classical Numismatics Group auction 82 (16.9.2009), lot 807. DINARA mfn 1797. Photograph courtesy Classical Numismatics Group.

Plate 4.17a-b: Lion-slayer Type. Obverse: Candragupta II kills a lion. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lion, scattering coins and holding a lotus. Gold *dināra*, 7.78 g (120.1 grains), dia. 17.17 cm. Stephen Album Rare Coins sale 10 (2011), lot 1130. DINARA mfn 208. Photographs courtesy Stephen Album Rare Coins.

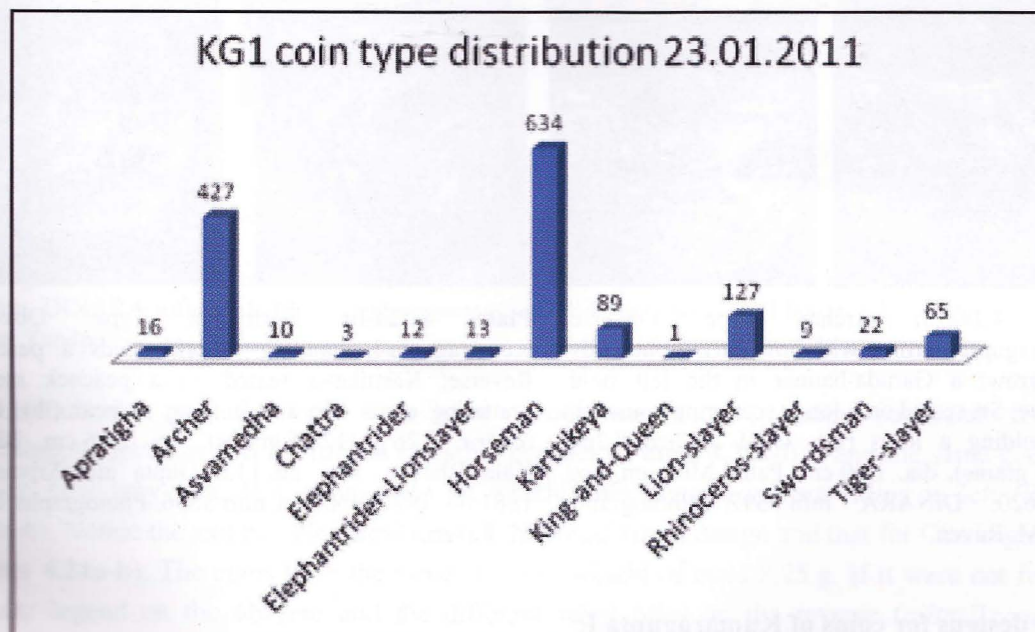


Plate 4.18: Type distribution among 1428 gold coins of Kumāragupta I recorded in the DINARA database on 23.1.2011.

There is a third group of designs for Candragupta II in a style characterized by short-statured figures with round shoulders, big heads, and big curls. The goddess sits in a fairly flat-knee sitting posture, and specific geometric symbols fill the top left field next to her. These designs come in the familiar range of Archer (Plate 4.14), Chattra (Plate 4.15), Horseman (Plate 4.16) and Lion-

slayer Types (**Plate 4.17**). The difference in style goes hand in hand with changes in the palaeography of the script in legends on obverse and reverse, and with the application of specific geometric symbols, including the cross-shaped kind seen here.



Plate 4.19a-b: Archer Type. Obverse: Kumāragupta I armed with bow (string outwards) and arrow; a Garuḍa-banner in the left field. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lotus, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.80 g (120.4 grains), dia. 1.90 cm. Bharat Kala Bhavan, acc. no. 69, Gupta and Srivastava 1981:no. 135. DINARA mfn 3895. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.



Plate 4.20a-b: Archer Type. Obverse: Kumāragupta I armed with bow and arrow; a Garuḍa-banner in the left field. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lotus, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.87 g (121.5 grains), dia. 2.00 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale Paris, acc. no. M.5382, DINARA mfn 3620. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.



Plate 4.21a-b: Archer Type. Obverse: Kumāragupta I armed with bow (string outwards) and arrow; a Garuḍa-banner in the left field. Reverse: Śrī seated on a lotus, scattering coins (rh) and holding a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 8.26 g (127.5 grains), dia. 1.90 cm. Patna Museum, acc. no. 18620, DINARA mfn 3697. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.



Plate 4.22a-b: Kārttikeya Type. Obverse: Kumāragupta I, standing to left, feeds a peacock. Reverse: Kārttikeya seated on a peacock mount, scattering coins (rh) and holding a spear (lh). Gold *dināra*, 8.26 g (127.5 grains), dia. 2.06 cm. Bharat Kala Bhavan, acc. no. 112, Gupta and Srivastava 1981:no. 193. DINARA mfn 3536. Photographs Ellen M. Raven.

Early designs for coins of Kumāragupta I:

The maturity that characterizes Gupta art under Kumāragupta I is mirrored in the expansion of coin portraits of that king. From seven types under Candragupta II, mint masters now employ almost twice as many for the coins of his son (**Plate 4.18**). These come in many styles, but here I focus on those styles that we discerned above in coins of Candragupta II. The big-headed king with the bold curls returns on coins revealing all the familiar characteristics (including their small size and low weight of 7.8 g), but only in those of Archer Type (**Plate 4.19**). The one notable

difference between the earlier and later design is the position of the bow, as it is now held string outwards. The curly-haired, bold king (Plates 4.10-4.11) also returns on coins of Kumāragupta I, but now styled in a more exuberant fashion (Plate 4.20a). The king's posture is more outspokenly thrust outwards, the curly hairdo now covered by a low, pearl-studded crown with a crest in front.⁷ The weight of such coins has remained the same, viz., around 8.0 g. The *dehanchement* was already presaged in coins of Candragupta II—compare the standing Śrī on Candragupta's Chattra coins (Plate 4.15) with Kumāragupta. The lion-slaying giant (Plate 4.13a) accompanied by the goddess scattering coins (Plate 4.13b), on coins of ca. 8.25 g, also returns in several designs of Kumāragupta, e.g., on his Archer coins. The king holds the bow with string turned outwards (Plate 4.21a). We may marvel at the closeness between the designs of Śrī scattering coins, while seated either on a lion mount (Plate 4.13b) or on a lotus (Plate 4.21b). Such parallels offer an enticing insight into the probable designing methods of the engravers, who apparently would and could rely heavily on existing designs for the creation of new ones.



Plate 4.23a-b: Horseman Type. Obverse: Kumāragupta I on horseback riding to left. Reverse: Śrī seated to left on a wicker stool, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 8.26 g (127.5 grains), dia. 1.90 cm. Collection Pankaj Tandon. DINARA mfn 3325. Photographs courtesy Pankaj Tandon.

Plate 4.24a-b: Horseman Type. Obverse: Candragupta II on horseback riding to left. Reverse: Śrī seated to left on a wicker stool, holding a fillet (rh) and a lotus (lh). Gold *dināra*, 8.24 g (127.1 grains), dia. unknown. Shivlee collection. DINARA mfn 170. Photograph courtesy of The Shivlee Trust.

Undoubtedly from the very same team of coin manufacturers come particular, equally appealing, coins on which Kārttikeya rides his peacock (Plates 4.22a-b),⁸ and the same goes for certain, now very rare, Horseman coins on which Kumāragupta is seen riding to left (Plates 4.23a-b). Notice the extreme closeness between this equestrian design and that for Candragupta II (Plates 4.24a-b). The coins have the same size and weight of circa 8.25 g. If it were not for the circular legend on the obverse and the different royal titles on the reverse (*ajitavikrama*—for Candragupta II, *ajitamahendra*—for his son), one might easily attribute both coins to the same mint under Candragupta II.⁹ Perhaps pre-existing dies were re-engraved to make a new series? Otherwise it is very difficult to explain the extreme closeness of these two designs.

Styles in various media:

Can we assess to what extent coins and sculptures partake in a similar evolution of Gupta period styles? A few parallels presented here invite further research. Among the very earliest of

accepted Gupta period sculptures we find a standing R̥ṣabhanātha in the Sonabhandar cave at Rajgir datable to the end of the reign of Candragupta II according to Joanna Williams (1986:35).¹⁰ The rendering of the lotus support is closely comparable to that of the lotus beneath the lady carrying a *caurī* on the Aśvamedha coins of Samudragupta. The reverse design of a coin in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art collection illustrates this quite beautifully.¹¹ These coins would date to around 370 A. D. at the latest. The lady's standing posture is usually ill-understood and at times even described as 'walking'. But what we see is the die-engraver's slightly awkward rendering of a superbly elegant standing posture which is more successful in Māyādevī giving birth to the Buddha, in a well-known and much later panel from Sarnath (Plate 4.25).

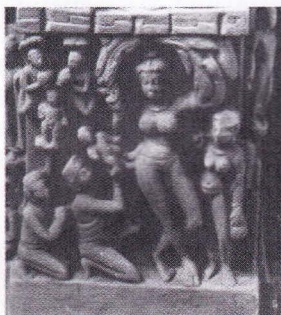


Plate 4.25: Māyādevī standing beneath an aśoka tree. Detail of a Buddha life stele from Sarnath, ca. 6th cent. AD. Indian Museum, Kolkata, acc. no. S2. Leiden University Library, Kern Institute Collections, Collection Jean Philippe Vogel, P-038323a, detail. Photograph courtesy: Friends of the Kern Institute, Leiden



Plate 4.26: Archer Type. Obverse: Candragupta II armed with bow (string outwards) and arrow. Reverse: Śrī seated on a throne, holding a fillet (rh) and a cornucopia (lh). Gold *dināra*, 7.74 g (119.4 grains), dia. 1.80 cm. Lingen collection, the Netherlands. DINARA mfn 1413. Photograph courtesy Jan Lingen.



Plate 4.27: Nāgarāja wearing beaded cord, at Nagauri (Sanchi area). Ca. 2nd-3rd cent. AD. Leiden University Library, Kern Institute Collections, Collection Jean Philippe Vogel, P-039775. Photograph courtesy Friends of the Kern Institute, Leiden.

A chronologically closer parallel is offered by the panel with a standing Pārśvanātha surrounded by *cāmara*-weaving attendants and Jinas from Patna, also discussed by Joanna Williams (her fig. 30). The *dhoti* style of the attendant to the Jina's left distinctly recalls that of Candragupta II on some of his early Archer coins (Plate 4.26). For the cord with beads that the king wears, we have Gupta period parallels among sculpted images of Nāga kings and queens. Such images have been found at Firozpur (Ferozpur) near Sanchi.¹² Julia Shaw, of the School of Archaeology in London, has recently suggested that the iconography of Nāga images in Sanchi area was made more royal as a response to the political dynastic strife between kings of the Nāga

and Gupta monarchies in the early Gupta period (Shaw 2007:186). Was the beaded *mālā* part of customary royal accoutrement of the region even before the Gupta times? Two images from Nagauri dating back to ca. 2nd-3rd century A. D. (one has been illustrated in **Plate 4.27**) also point in that direction.¹³ The extent to which such a beaded cord belonged to royal gear of the early Gupta period also outside Nāga territory is worth investigating.

Finally, it is not only to Gupta period and pre-Gupta period sculpture in stone that we should look when investigating stylistic links between coins and other art media of the period. The terracottas of the early Gupta period are a very potent source of comparables as well, as may be evident from a Horse-rider image on a broken panel from the terraced temple at Pawaya (Morris 2002:fig. 14). That sculptors, manufacturers of terracottas and engravers of coin dies could so closely share the iconographies and stylistic formulas of their times is perhaps one of the most intriguing outcomes of this preliminary comparative exercise.

References:

1. It reveals 'a quest for plastic harmony' (Williams 1986:61).
2. We still do not know where these mints were located.
3. I am not aware of a reliable estimate of the number of coins that have survived, but would venture that it may be around 15,000 maximum and perhaps considerably less. By end of April 2011 the number of registered coins in the DINARA database that I have developed amounts to 6,000 pieces (with an unknown error margin for duplicate records on one and the same coin, such as those originally from the Bayana hoard). The large majorities of coins from this huge find of at least 1821+ coins were not illustrated in the catalogue and have become dispersed among museum collections. An unknown number of coins from the collection of the Maharaja of Bharatpur appeared on the art market during the last decades. Other Bayana coins may also have reached private collections since 1946.
4. <http://www.baldwin.co.uk/auction-ny25>.
5. 1682 coins of this king were recorded in the DINARA database on 23 January 2011.
6. Of the two specimens that I have seen so far, one is in the National Museum, New Delhi, acc. no. 51.77/37, Chhabra 1986:no. 297, fig. 20.12.
7. Compare the crested crown worn by Kumāragupta I on the relatively rare coins of Swordsman Type. A fine specimen was auctioned by Steve Album on 16-17 September 2011 (Album 2011) as lot no. 1031. Estimated to fetch between USD 2500-3000, the coin eventually was hammered off at USD 29.900! Check for details url http://db.stevealbum.com/php/lot_auc.php?site=2&sale=11&lot=1031. In my 1994 thesis I have attributed the Swordsman coins to the same mint as the Archer coin illustrated in fig. 20.
8. I presented an iconological analysis of the Kārttikeya Type at the Vienna conference of South Asian Archaeology 2010. The proceedings are forthcoming.
9. It is therefore hardly surprising that even the great numismatist Robert Göbl, working in Vienna, was somewhat puzzled. He noted down on an index card with a picture of an auctioned coin in this particular style: 'Chandra Gupta oder Kumara Gupta I'. The *biruda* next to the seated goddess reads '*ajitamahendra*', the customary title of Kumāragupta I on his Horseman coins.

10. Williams illustrates a segment of the full relief in her fig. 29. More images are available in the photo archive of the American Institute of Indian Studies via http://dsal.uchicago.edu/images/aiis/aiis_search.html?depth=large&id=38170
11. The url of Gupta coin no. M.84.110.1 in the LACMA is <http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=record;id=53165;type=101>.
12. Williams 1976: figs 3-4; Shaw 2007:185-189.
13. Julia Shaw discusses quite a few images of *nāga* kings and queens, from the early centuries of our era upto the Gupta period that carry a similar ornamental beaded cord. Some have been previously published; others have been newly documented by her (2007).

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