

## MORE GONDOPHARES, LESS AZES AND JUST WHO MET ST. THOMAS? R. C. Senior

In the first century B.C. the Greek rulers of North-Western India were succeeded by the Indo-Scythians and they in turn by the Kushans, but during this whole period, and for several centuries, few dates are fixed with any certainty and much controversy has been generated by various theories concerning the chronology.

Three eras were certainly in use at this time:

- (1) The Arsacid era of 247 B.C.
- (2) The Azes or Vikrama era of 57 B.C.
- (3) The Saka era of 78 A.D.

In order to accommodate the various theories other eras have been suggested:

- (a) An Indo-Bactrian era of c. 155 B.C.
- (b) The era of Kanishka, c. 128 A.D. This last has created the most dispute over the last 100 years.

As Dr. A.D.H. Bivar so clearly expressed the case in the Cambridge History of Iran (p.202) "The date of Gondophares is the sheet anchor for any reliable theory of early Indian chronology". Gondophares was an Indo-Scythic king who is mentioned in an inscription at Takht-i-Bahi as being on the throne in year 103 of an unspecified era, his 26th year of reign. If the Azes era is taken as the one used, that would give Gondophares a reign of c. 19 - 46 A.D.. Western authorities in particular cling to this fact as gospel because it confirms the information given in the Apocryphal Acts of St. Thomas that the latter travelled to India and met a king Gudnaphar, and it suits the chronology perfectly.

Coins exist of a King Gondophares and by placing these coins in this period, c. 19 - 46 A.D. all authors have attempted to fit the coinage of his predecessors and successors around them. This has given the relationships on which the theories of accession of the various Kushan and Indo-Scythian (Saka) monarchs and their satraps has been based. If one removes this absolute fact which is the foundation for all the theories then the whole edifice collapses and the chronology for the period from c. 100 B.C. until well into the third century A.D. has to be revised. Many 'accepted' dates have to be abandoned and some old theories perhaps revived. This is what I propose to do in this paper.

Put simply, I am going to suggest that the Takht-i-Bai inscription does not refer to the same king whose coins are generally accepted as being those of 'Gondophares' because the coins of this king were in circulation some 60 or so years earlier than supposed and that therefore the inscription refers to a later Gondophares. There are several such kings.

It is also possible that the inscription is dated in some era, other than that of Azes, i.e., the supposed era of c. 155 B.C. and this would not invalidate the Apocryphal Acts testimony because, as already suggested, there were several kings called Gondophares. I do not believe that the latter of the two hypotheses is the case. The important point is that if the first Gondophares is placed c. 60 years earlier, then so must all of his successors and thus the much disputed 'era of Kanishka' can be restored to 78 A.D. from the generally accepted c. 128 A.D. I do not propose to deal with the Kushan period, or the consequence of this revision of the chronology, but to give my evidence for placing Gondophares '1st' so early. A summary of my argument is that:

- (i) his silver drachm currency of Seistan province is copied from Parthian prototypes of c. 60-50 B.C.
- (ii) a countermark with the 'Gondophares' symbol  $\text{X}$  is overstruck on coins of c. 50 - 30 B.C. (and overstruck carefully so as not to obliterate the image of the 'reigning' monarch) and the same countermark only appears elsewhere overstruck on Gondophares' own portrait currency of Arachosia.
- (iii) there is only ONE king called Azes who we know founded an era beginning in 57 B.C. and that Gondophares and his nephew Abdagases probably took territory from him during his lifetime and were certainly his direct successors in other areas.
- (iv) in view of the above, the Gondophares of the coins, so classified in most catalogues, ruled in a period during the first century B.C. and could not have met St. Thomas, or been the Gondophares who ruled c. 19 - 46 A.D.

I shall now deal with the three main provinces where Gondophares' coins circulated in order to illustrate these points.

### SEISTAN, where the currency was of silver drachms only.

It is in this province that Gondophares I seems to have begun his career of conquest. He issued several silver drachms on the Parthian standard with his portrait and two types claim our notice. Firstly comes the type with diademed bust obverse and reverse with legend: King of kings, the great Gondophares, ruler in his own right (Autokrator) (coin 1). A variety of this which I published in the Numismatic Circular, Vol. XCVI (Dec. 1988 p. 312/3) has the additional epithet 'Victorious' (2). These coins would seem to refer to Gondophares breaking away from Parthian suzerainty, possibly after some military success. The reverse type on the coins is of a female figure standing behind the king's throne with hand raised. The first Parthian coin to carry a similar design is the tetradrachm of Phraates III (Sellwood 39.1) and the obverse bust resembles the previous issue of Phraates, Sellwood 38. Phraates III ruled from c. 70 - 57 B.C. The female on the 'victorious' variety issue seems to be flying and though without wings is probably intended to be Nike.

The second issue to bear Gondophares' name has the legend expanded to: King of Kings, the great Gondophares, called Sae (3). On these coins the king wears a tiara associated with the steppes and identical to that worn on the Phraates tetradrachm above mentioned (S.39.1). It was also worn by Gotarzes I (c. 90 - 95 B.C.), but by no other Parthian monarch. The reverse of the coin of Gondophares has a winged Nike behind the throne. The first Parthian silver coins to have a flying Nike in their design are the tetradrachms of Phraates' successor, Mithradates III c. 57 - 54 B.C. (S.41.1), which, with some accompanying drachms, are the only Parthian coins of this period to incorporate in the reverse legend the personal name of the king in the form 'called Mithradates' or 'called the son of Phraates'. It can hardly be a coincidence that this is the form used on the above mentioned coins of Gondophares and at a time when there was considerable political uncertainty in Parthian affairs. This must have been in the period when Gondophares achieved his full independence - during the struggle between the patricidal brothers Mithradates III and Orodes II (57 - 38 B.C.) The portrait on his coins is that of a middle-aged man and his rule probably began in the last years of Phraates' reign or shortly thereafter. Later, he is succeeded by his nephew Abdagases and some of the latter's issues were probably struck while Gondophares was still alive but probably elderly. In Gandhara some tetradrachms refer to Gondophares and their familial relationship on the obverse (see below - coins 71, 72). In Seistan, apart from drachms in his own name (4) (see Numismatic Circular XCVI above) there are some issues which bear Abdagases' portrait but Gondophares' titles and legends (5) - see Numismatic Circular XCVII, September 1989 p.220-222.

## Silver drachms of DRANGIANA and copper tetradrachms of ARACHOSIA

From the time of Mithradates II, c. 123 - 88 B.C., Parthian drachms circulated in the easternmost provinces of the empire and were countermarked by the semi-autonomous tribes living there (6). In the time of Orodes II one group in this region goes further than this by issuing drachms with the portrait and types of Orodes II but with innovative legends bearing the additional epithet 'Theopator' (7) (see Numismatic Circular XCVII, Feb. 1989 p.3).

Many of these coins are found countermarked with the symbol associated with Gondophares and his successors - the planetary symbol for Mercury  $\Upsilon$  and known on the Indo-Scythic coinage as the 'Gondophares symbol' by most authors. This symbol also appears on (a unique coin in my collection) a coin of Phraates IV (c. 32 - 2 B.C.) of one of his earliest issues (9). The **only** other coins on which this countermark appears are the portrait copper tetradrachms of Gondophares I of Arachosian type (10). Obviously this countermark was applied to authorise the circulation of coins from one area in another and the countermark must have been applied at the same period. If Gondophares expanded his territory from Seistan to Arachosia in the period of Orodes II's rule in Parthia then the application by him of his dynastic symbol in a province such as Drangiana would be to validate the circulation there of his Arachosian coins and the 'Orodes II-type' drachms from Areia (Herat) or wherever they were originally issued. It would be a nonsense to imagine that the countermark was resurected some 60 years later just for one issue.

There is a variant of the countermark with the addition of the legend 'ORTHAGNOY' written around it, also countermarked on one of the above 'Orodes II-type' coins (Sellwood 91.10). Gondophares means 'Winner of Glory' but, just as it is used as the personal name of the first king, so probably is the name Orthagnes, which is probably derived from the name of the War God, Verethragna.

Gondophares becomes a dynastic name or title used by several later kings and it would seem that so does the name Orthagnes. Silver drachms bearing the name Orthagnes and the same reverse types as Gondophares are known from Seistan and it is possible that this name was given to a joint ruler with the first Gondophares, possibly a brother (11). There is an extensive series of Arachosian coppers bearing this name but the results of a recent, unpublished hoard seem to indicate that we are dealing with several kings who fall later in the Indo-Scythic period. In the hoard mentioned are very worn coins of Gondophares I, Sases and Sapedanes (this may be a title, too; there are several varieties of the name in Greek, and on the reverse the name in Kharosthi is sometimes Sapedanasa and sometimes Gadanasa, suggesting more than one king; see coins 84 and 85). These worn coins preceded the Orthagnes coins in the hoard which were in better condition.. The latest coins in the hoard were those of Sanabares then Pakores, the latter being overstruck on Soter Megas coins. Orthagnes is spelt Orthagnoy, Orthagnoytoc, Orthagnec and Orthagn with reverse legends naming Gadanasa or Gudupharasa Gadanasa. The portraits differ, the diadem ties vary in number and I believe that we are dealing with a series of kings. The longer forms of the name are the earliest and these coins were more worn in the hoard than the later forms. Though the silver coins bearing the name Orthagnes may be close to the Gondophares I issues, the Arachosian coppers with this name can now be shown to come much later. Previously, they have been thought to be contemporary with the Gondophares coins or even precede them. Abdagases, the main successor of Gondophares in Gandhara seems to have played little part in Arachosia and is only known to have ruled there briefly from a unique coin in the British Museum (Coin Hoards VII, fig 36). As was evidenced by the aforementioned hoard, Gondophares was primarily succeeded in Arachosia by Sases, who was Abdagases' rival and eventual successor. The coins of Sases are particularly relevant because their obverse legend reads: "King of kings, the great Gondophares" (12), when we know that Gondophares I must have been deceased by the time that such coins were issued. On the reverse Sases calls himself "The maharaja raja of rajas, the great GONDOPHARES SASA". Sases could rightly perhaps be called Gondophares II?

## GANDHARA and contiguous provinces.

In Gandhara a bi-metal currency of silver and copper circulated in the time of Azes. During his reign the silver become debased and this seems to have been accompanied by the change in the obverse design from the king being mounted holding a spear (KMS) to one where he holds a whip (KMW). The further debasement of the silver gives a clue as to when the contemporary issues of Gondophares and his nephew Abdagases were struck. Eventually the currency is reduced to copper-only in the time of Abdagases' successor Sases.

The great controversy of the past has been how many kings were called Azes. It is now generally accepted that there were two, but I would propose that in fact there was only one after all! Azes and Gondophares were, in my opinion, contemporaries and though Gondophares may have outlived Azes it would have been only a few years. The time between the accession of Azes in 57 B.C. (supposing his era to be dated from then, rather than the commemoration of some other event) and the presently accepted date of Gondophares' accession (c. 19 A.D.) gives a total of 77 years. This is an impossible gap to fill and one where a second Azes would have needed to be invented anyway. This problem now disappears if we accept the earlier dates for Gondophares and the coins themselves show how the transition of power took place from the house of Azes to that of Gondophares and subsequently the related house of Sases. Speculating that Azes was around 25 years old on his accession and giving him around 35 years reign which would be generous, he would have been around 60 in 22 B.C., and Gondophares possibly even older. The coinage allocated to Azes I (the KMS issues) is far too scarce to cover such a period though that given previously to Azes II (KMW issues) just might, especially since some of it is clearly posthumous; but if all the issues bearing the name Azes are allocated to ONE king it is certainly feasible to think of a reign of c. 35 years. There is no possibility that the Azes coinage was issued for a period as long as 77 years though!

## THE MEANING OF AZES TYPES AND OUTLINE OF HIS REIGN

Each Indo-Greek king used a reverse type on his silver coinage that had some personal relevance to him and several kings who might have used the same type probably had some dynastic connection. The northern Indo-Scythians (in India) who we shall now call Sakas to distinguish them from the southern Indo-Scythians, who I shall hereafter refer to as Gondopharids, adopted these reverse types where they were current at the time of their conquest. The types become regional therefore.

Azes ruled in Northern Arachosia initially but expanded his territory north to include the major cities of Gandhara and eventually the province of Hazara where his Saka rival called Azilises seems to have had his base. He lost the southern provinces in Arachosia and parts of Gandhara to the Gondopharids. The loss of these provinces and the defeat of Azilises seems to have occurred at the same time and is accompanied by the debasement of the currency. After Azes died some of his coin types seem to have been issued in his name posthumously for a while before the Gondopharids eventually acquired these areas too.

## EVIDENCE FOR THERE BEING ONE AZES

If we can show that the Azes KMS coinage is immediately followed by the KMW coinage without interruption then the need to create a second Azes disappears. The explanation for the use of two obverse types could be that Azes acquired the territory where Azilises had issued KMW coins or his need to debase the coinage and identify it as such, or a combination of the two.

If we examine the regional types used by Azes we can see (a) that no other king interrupts his coinage and that (b) the coinage stops when succeeded by the Gondoparids or other satraps.

### (a) ZEUS – FACING ISSUES CIRCULATING IN N. ARACHOSIA

Azes adopted this type from the Vonones group which preceded him and from which he was probably descended. The sequence is very clear with the earliest issues of Azes being jointly minted with 'The great King Spalirises' (13). These are linked by the use of square sigmas to Azes' first independent issue and also the introduction of Kharosthi letters in the reverse field of the coins which show that both series bearing monograms  $\boxtimes$  and  $\boxtimes$  are linked together. These are similarly linked to the issue bearing the monogram  $\boxtimes$  by the use of 5 of the same letters plus an additional letter Dhra  $\text{𑀅}$  in the right field (15). Apart from some more northerly issues with the  $\text{A}$  monogram, the facing Zeus series comes to an end. There are no issues of this type either by Azes in his later series (King mounted with whip – KMW) or by any other king. The next issue in this area is probably the Siva type of Gondophares with monogram  $\boxtimes$  (16) where Siva adopts the same posture and, perhaps significantly, on many of the coins there is a prominent Dhra  $\text{𑀅}$  in the reverse field which appeared on coin 15 above. Azes' good-silver KMS issues were followed by a baser KMW issue elsewhere, but here in the South-west of his kingdom it seems reasonable that his successor, Gondophares, would issue a base coinage of similar design. It would seem that Gondophares proceeded north from N. Arachosia to the Kabul valley (where he issued a copper currency) and his other Siva issue with field symbol/letter  $\text{G}$  was struck in northern Gandhara (17) and probably modelled on a coin of Azilises with reverse type standing King (18). The currency used by Gondophares in Arachosia was based on copper and probably he did not have access to silver in quantity so that he may have in fact initiated the debasement of the currency of the N. Arachosia (Ghazni) region, forcing Azes to also debase his currency?

### (b) PALLAS ISSUES CIRCULATING INITIALLY IN PUSKALAVATI AND W. GANDHARA


This is a complicated series and the initial issues with KMS obverse fall into several groups according to whether the right reverse field has the letter A  $\text{𑀅}$  or a monogram  $\text{𑀅}$ ,  $\text{𑀅}$ ; whether the additional control letter, if there is any, is in the exergue, or before the horse on the obverse; whether the streamer behind the king is double or single and whether there is a pellet on the reverse by Pallas's elbow. The only point I need to raise in this paper is to show which of the two kings, Azes or Azilises, struck their coins first. The argument for there being two kings called Azes has been that a king Azilises comes between them. I hope to show that this is not the case and that in all cases where the two kings strike coins of the same type, the coins of Azilises precede those of Azes and that the coinage is continuous from Azes KMS to Azes KMW. The Azilises coins with Pallas reverse are rare and they have monogram  $\text{A}$  in the left reverse field and A  $\text{𑀅}$  in the right (19). Most coins have NO obverse letter unlike the Azes coins of this type. When there is a letter it appears before the horse. The streamer is always double. Two coins are known which have been referred to as 'joint' coins since they have an Azilises obverse and an Azes reverse. One of them has a Ga  $\text{𑀅}$  control letter on the obverse whereas the only known obverse control letter of Azilises on this type otherwise is Da  $\text{𑀅}$ . I believe that these coins are mules, as is born out by their extreme rarity. Another point to note is that on several of the Azilises coins the reverse legend is divided between the first Ja and second Ra of Raja/–rajasa by the thunderbolt that Pallas is carrying. On Azes coins, with one exception, the thunderbolt cuts the legend between the first Ra and first Ja thus: Ra/ –jarajasa. The exception is the principal evidence for the sequence. On this particular coin we can say that the die cutter worked under Azilises and was taken over by Azes, cutting in effect the same reverse die except for the king's name (20). On the obverse he was not very alert and began to cut the name of Azilises, reaching AZIL before realising his mistake and then altered the die to read AZOY. This is fairly conclusive proof that the Azilises coins come before the Azes coins. That, and the fact that practically all subsequent Azes Pallas – type issues have obverse control letters unlike the initial Azilises Pallas coins which mostly do not, leaves no other interpretation open. There is no break between these Pallas issues of Azes KMS obverse and those with KMW obverse which share the same monograms.



### (c) THE DEITY WITH BRAZIER ISSUES CIRCULATING IN CENTRAL GANDHARA.

This, too, is a complicated series. It was issued solely by Azilises and Azes and the monograms used on the coins cannot be identified as mint-monograms. The monogram  $\text{𑀅}$  was certainly used in at least two widely differing localities (see Numismatic Circular XCVII March 1989 p.44-5). In one locality the type is distinguished by its crude design and it is only in this locality that Azes struck coins with this monogram. This was the commonest monogram used on Azilises' coins of this type, but the scarcest on those of Azes, showing that Azes acquired this area fairly late before the KMW-debasement and disappearance of this type. Two mules are known which have been catalogued previously as 'joint' coins but to indicate how the succession might have proceeded we need to look at some additional symbols that appear on these coins. On some coins a pellet is used on the obverse in addition to the Kharosthi letter(s). On Azilises' coins, it always appears before the horse on his neat-style coins, and also on some of those of Azes using monogram  $\text{𑀅}$ . On the cruder coins it can also appear before the horse's head on Azilises' coins (21) but BEHIND the horse on Azes' coins (22), sometimes by the king's elbow. This is significant because the issues that seem to replace this deity are the Azes KMW issues of Pallas right and 'Poseidon' right with monograms  $\text{𑀅}$  and  $\text{𑀅}$  which obviously come later than the Azilises coins and also have the pellet BEHIND the king (23). If the Azilises coins came AFTER the Azes–KMS–Deity issues and before Azes KMW coins then this obviously would not be the case. A final piece of evidence in this series is the corresponding copper. The Azilises 'Hercules' reverse coins (24) follow the weight standard of the Spalahores and Spalagadames join coppers of the same type (25) which obviously precede Azes. The Azes coins are on a lighter standard (26) which declines further to a late coin with 'rajatarajasa' reverse legend in my collection (27). The relevance of this title-form, 'rajatarajasa' is dealt with below but its significance is that on Azes' coins it only appears on the KMW coins which are certainly post Azilises.

### (d) OTHER ISSUES

The other issues of Azes not fully covered above are the Zeus/Nike issue of Azes, the Zeus Nikephoros (ZN) issues, and the Zeus–right (called by some cataloguers 'Poseidon') issues. These groups are all interconnected. Briefly, if we take the Zeus Nikephoros issues first, we can see a direct link that runs Maues (c. 80 B.C. for his first issues), Azilises, then Azes. The 'seated Tyche/Zeus Nikephoros' type of Maues alone (28) is very closely copied by the joint Maues–Machene coin of the same types (Mitchiner Vol. 5, 736). It can be shown to come close to the end of Maues' reign by the fact that on the joint coin, square sigmas are used which came into fashion just at the inception of Azes' reign and then mostly went out of fashion again. The next issue is the Azilises type with the "Zeus Nikephoros/mounted Dioscuri" (29). ALL Maues coins and ALL Azilises–KMW coins have a dialect variation in the reverse legend of Rajatarajasa in place of the Rajarajasa on the Azes and Azilises KMS issues. The

middle 'ti' (or 'di') is probably equivalent to the difference between the Pashto and Pakhto dialects spoken by the present Pathan tribesmen. This is important because the first issue of this type of Azes has a KMS obverse yet 'rajaTirajasa' in the legend on the reverse – the only KMS issue to do so. The coin is also slightly base and is positively later than the Azilises issue. It is then followed by the common KMW issues of Azes. Clearly the sequence is Maues to Maues + Machene to Azilises, all good silver, and then to the KMS issue of Azes (Mitchiner Vol. 6 836,7 – the drachm is also linked to the Azilises coinage by monogram  (3) which is baser) and finally the common KMW issue of Azes (31).



The Zeus/Nike coins of Azes are a little more problematic. The type was used by Maues (32) but on his death we know that there was an Indo-Greek revival and many of his acquisitions were lost to Apollodotos II and Hippistratos. I believe that Azilises took over most of Maues' kingdom north of Taxila (Hazara) and was his direct Saka successor. The evidence is in his use of types, monograms and style of coins adopted from Maues. Azes was able to seize the city of Taxila from Hippistratos and I believe that he struck his Zeus/Nike coins (33) there as a Saka heir of Maues, though I doubt that there was any direct kinship. He also issued a KMS series with the same Zeus from another city that he captured from Hippistratos using monogram  (34). At this time Azilises also struck KMW with Zeus but with Zeus facing right instead of left (35). One variant of Azes KMS/Zeus issue in fact has Zeus right, too (Alram-Iranisches Personennamenbuch pl. 29, 1000). This is the forerunner of the Azes KMW/'Poseidon' – Zeus coins which become the main type for the Gondopharids (36). The Zeus coins of Azilises/ Azes do not present an absolutely clear picture but some coppers with the same monogram  to Azes' Zeus/Nike coins are imitated directly from the same coins of Azilises.

This is my evidence put briefly for there being but one Azes. I shall expand on it at greater length elsewhere but here it is merely to demonstrate that Azilises is a rival/contemporary of Azes who precedes him in most places. Azilises certainly is outlasted by Azes and then we have the Gondopharids as his successors and this can not have been later than c. 20 B.C. — some 40 years before Gondophares was previously believed to have begun his reign!









I shall now examine what happens to the different types of Azes in Gandhara and how they are followed by those of his successors, and showing especially that Gandharan coins bearing the name Gondophares were probably issued during the lifetime of Azes as he lost territory to Gondophares (as suggested already with the Siva issues above (16) in Arachosia).

## THE GONDOPHARID SUCCESSION


### (A) The Pallas issues.





After the KMS issues, the first Pallas types that Azes issued with KMW obverse had Pallas to the left, or Pallas facing (Bunir hoard mentioned in the Num. Circular above). No metal analysis has been made of these coins but I suspect that these issues are slightly baser than the KMS coins, but not as base as the succeeding 'Pallas to the right coinage'. The 'Pallas to the right' coins can be classified simply according to whether the legend has 'rajarajasa' or 'rajaTirajasa' and each group subdivided according to whether Pallas has any drapery showing between her spear and dress. There are further subdivisions according to the forms of letters, whether or not drachms were issued, etc., but of concern here is only that the majority of these coins form a cohesive group in similar style and purity of silver, and were issued while Azes still lived. There are some exceptions that are baser than the main group and they tend to have corrupt legends. Two of this group bear the monograms  or  (37) and one would tend to think that they were later than previous issues, but the hoard in which one of them was found (Mir Zakah II – which I have catalogued but not yet published) contained only very early KMW issues. These coins were probably minted in or near Arachosia (they also have the pellet behind the king as on earliest KMW coins) and their debasement possibly has some connection with the arrival of Gondophares in this area as suggested above. Generally, Azes KMW coins only come from Gandhara and these may be his last issues in Arachosia province.









The other base issues are:

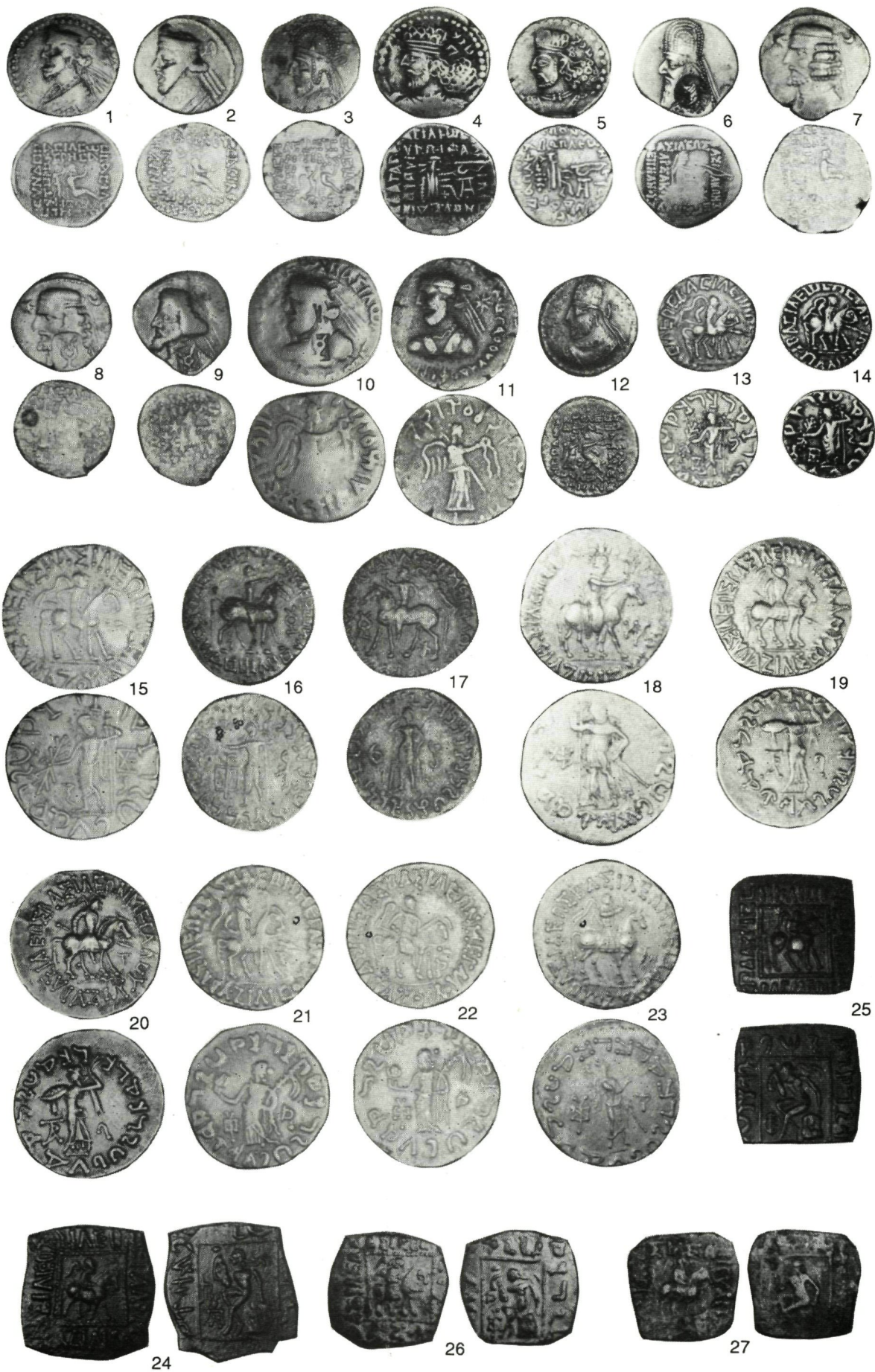
- (i) Type with monograms  which sometimes bear on the lower left of the reverse either 3 dots  or a Nandipada  (38). These three dots appear elsewhere on the Siva coins of Gondophares with monogram  (accompanied by Dhra ) (16) and also on the 'son of Kharahostes' coins. This would confirm a very late date for their issue, possibly posthumous to Azes.
- (ii) An issue spotted by Masson and published by him in 1834 in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, but which only resurfaced recently in a hoard found at Takht-i-Bahi (catalogued by me, but not yet published). In this hoard were some 400 tetradrachms of Azes of largely what I prefer to regard as posthumous issues (see below) with Zeus Nikephoros reverse and two types of Pallas. The first type was the Masson type in unusual style with monogram  in the left field and a large Kha  in the right field (39). This letter appears prominently also on the copper tetradrachms in the name of Azes with the symbol  and reverse type – 'Deity left with cornucopia' (40). I would allocate the latter issues to Kajula Kadphises. This connection perhaps confirms that the Masson type must be at or after the end of Azes' reign, Kujula Kadphises coming somewhat later, after Gondophares.

The second Pallas type in the hoard is:

- (iii) The largest group of Pallas coins that was in the hoard. It is this type that holds the key to the succession by the Gondopharids. They are of stylized design and all bear the monogram  and a nandipada (associated with posthumous Azes in almost all cases) in the left field. Table 1 needs to be examined to make the sequence clear. The arrangement of this table and classification of coins is based on the results of analysing several overlapping hoards. It becomes evident that the coinage develops from one level of debasement (the same starting level as the better Gondophares Pallas coins (see 46) to progressively baser coins with decreasing flan size until the currency is practically pure copper. I think that the initial coinage is a posthumous issue struck immediately after Azes' demise. The prototype was a coin (found worn in the hoard) with monograms

 Note the use of Va  on the reverse which seems important on most of the issues concerned here. Usually on the coins of the prototype type, the monogram is shown , but on this particular coin it is , as on the issue being examined. The early coins seem to have been struck at two different workshops:

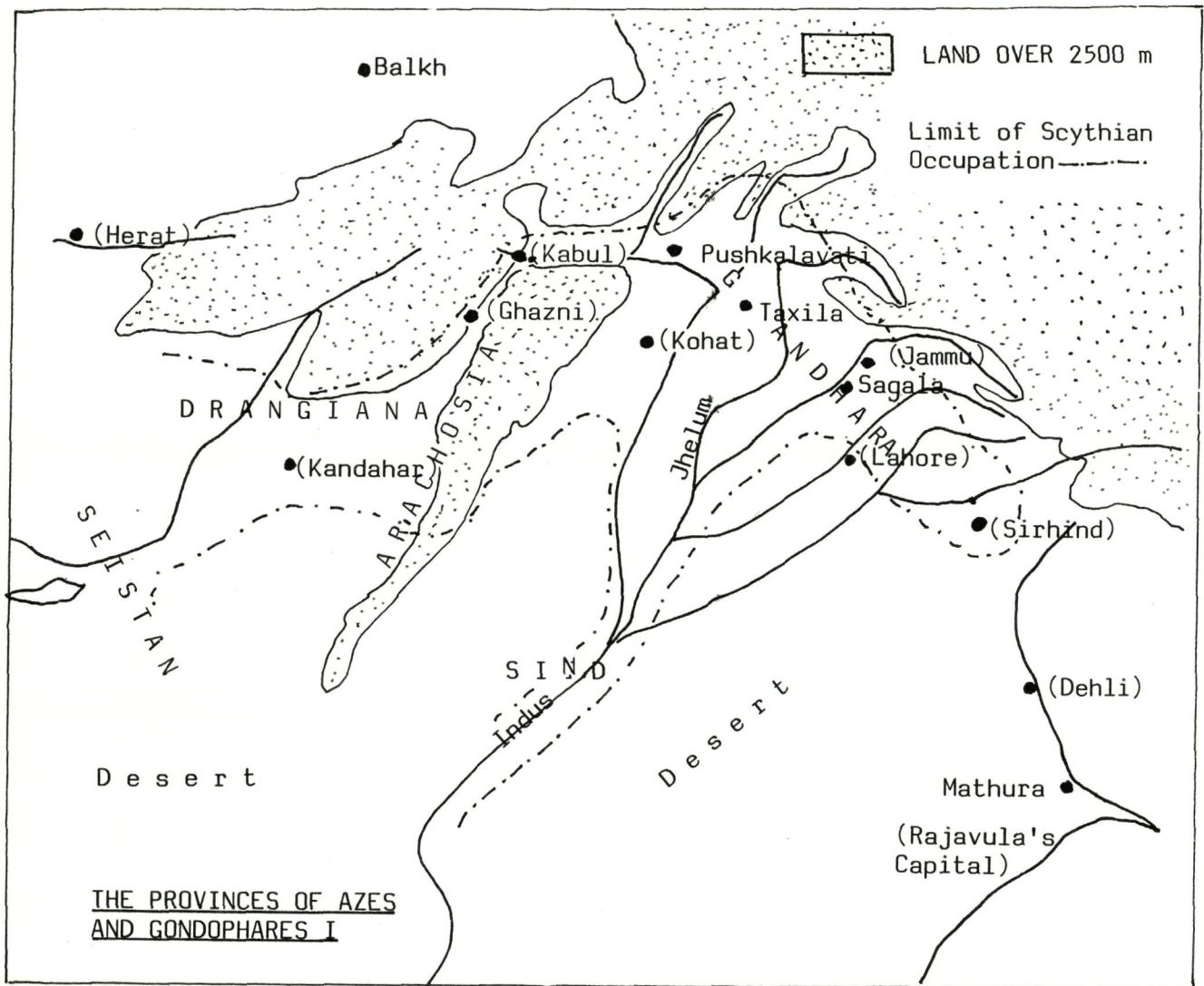
- (1) One placed the corrupt form of Azes' name, variously mis-spelt and reading out from the coin, at between 9 and 12 o'clock. The nandipada on the reverse usually has a pellet in the lower part e.g. . A prominent feature of these coins is the appearance of a small heart mark  in the legend, mostly between the B and A of BACILEWVN. The first word BACILEWC is shortened to BACILEI (41). On the second issue letters appear below the horse, Sra  or Pra  (42). This is followed by a baser issue which has the Va  on the reverse and also the letter Bra  (43). The only issues to use elements of this design are two issues of Abdagases (44, 45) and these coins actually appear together in the Malakand hoard in the Smithsonian Institute (to be published shortly by O. Bopearachchi). There are no intervening issues of Gondophares with these controls unless they are the Pallas issues with monogram  (46). These are of far superior style and predate the stylized posthumous Azes issue discussed here and in fact seem contemporary with the Azes coins with the monograms  (47).







Gondopharès Sarpedanes





1 workshop using erratic spellings- name reads OUT  
 AZZY, □AZZY, A□ZZ□Y..  
 2 name reads IN consistently-spelt  
 AZZ□Λ  
 except A which have regular (correct) legends  
 3 ZZA□Λ reading OUT  
 4 King mounted LEFT

BASE SILVER COINS BECOMING BASER UNTIL COPPER ONLY

POSTHUMOUS AZES 'PALLAS' ISSUE

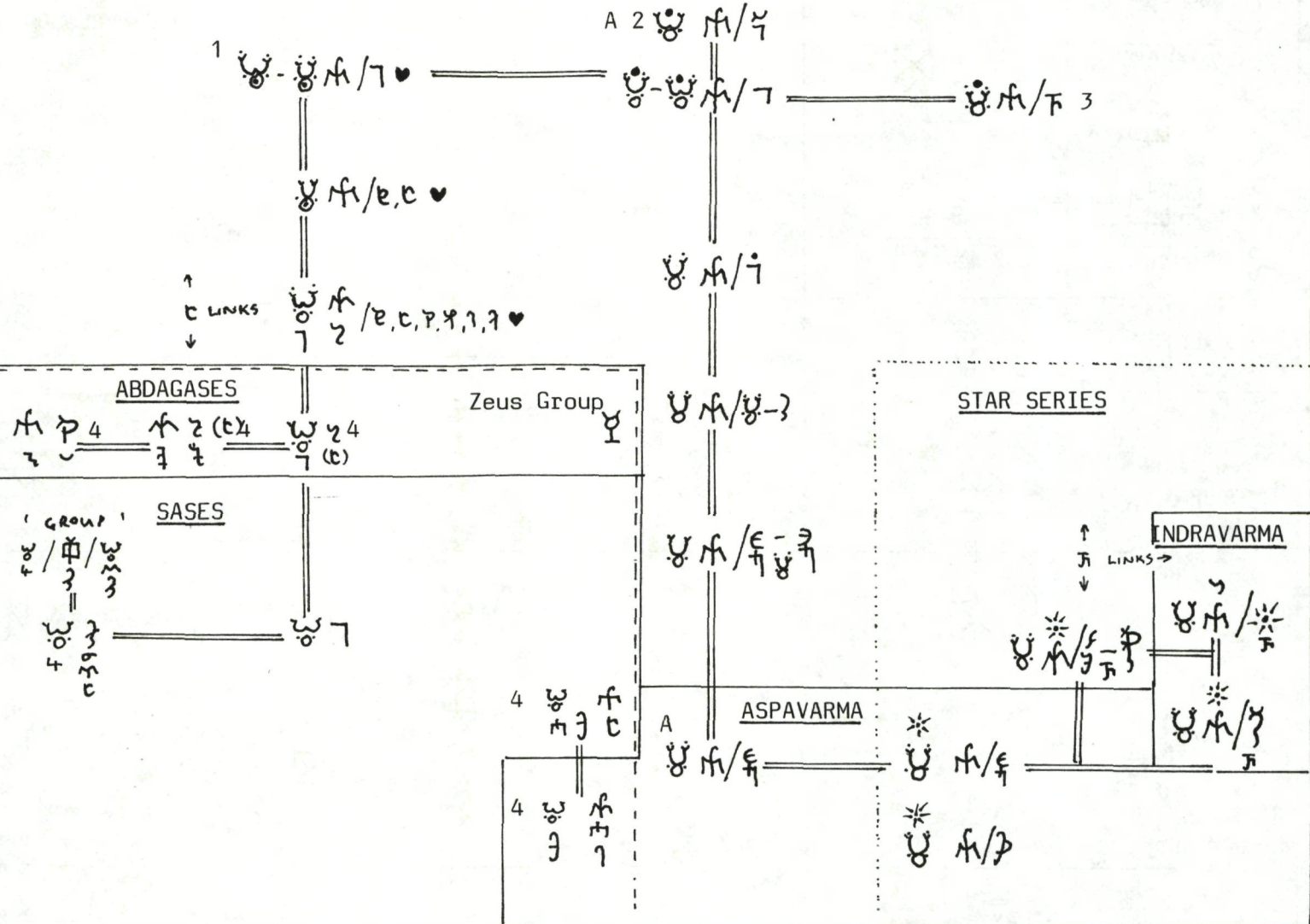


TABLE 1

Showing the progression of the PALLAS coins with  $\text{ᵛ} \text{ᵛ}$  to the Zeus series

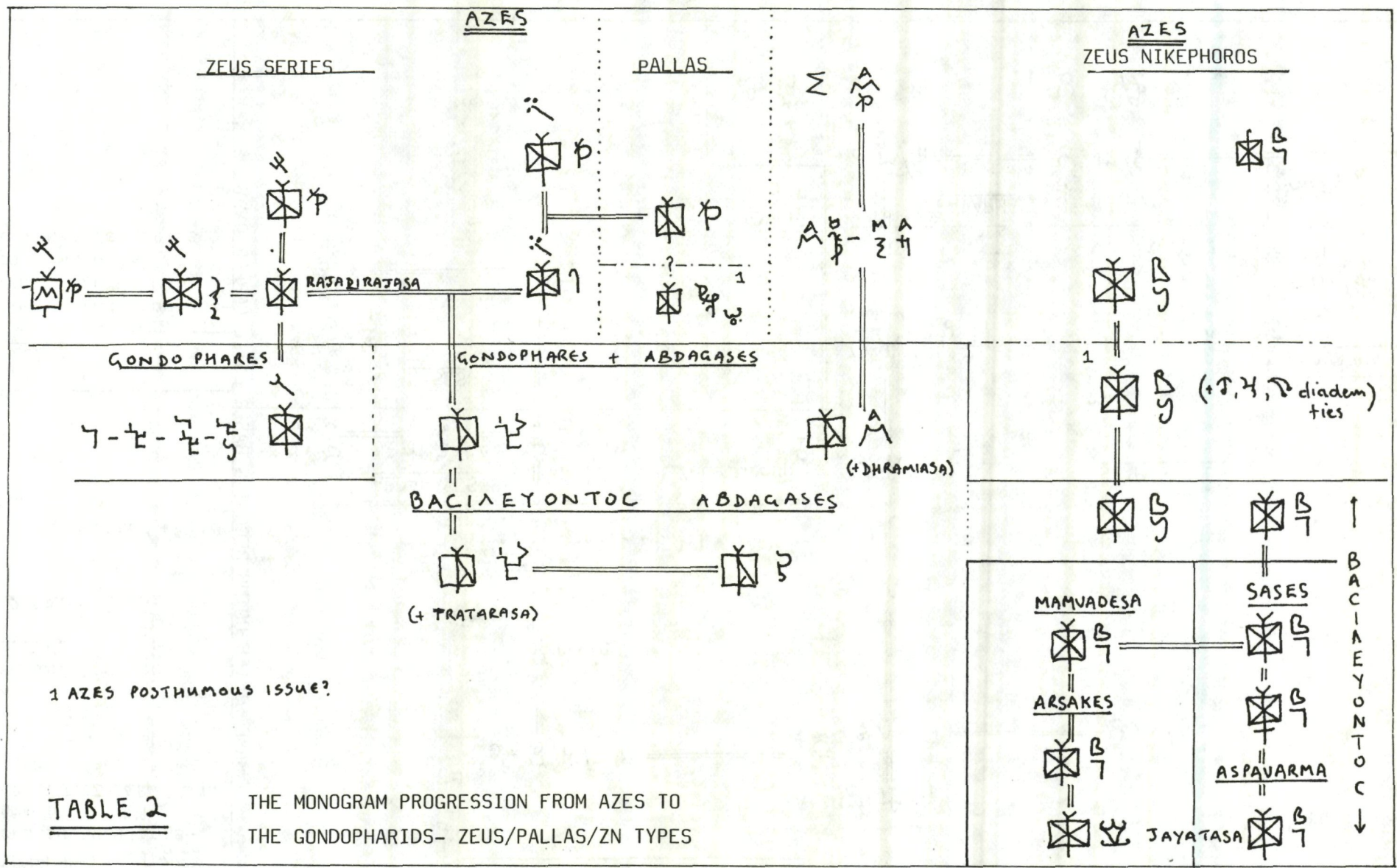






















TABLE 2 THE MONOGRAM PROGRESSION FROM AZES TO THE GONDOPHARIDS- ZEUS/PALLAS/ZN TYPES

(2) The second variety has no pellet in the nandipada (48) but begins with a group that has a prominent pellet **above** the nandipada . The very first issue has Mu over Va  on the obverse and the obverse legend is very close to the original with AZOY at the bottom. From here the main series progresses to the lowest level of debasement with a corrupt but unchanging legend AZZOL reading in, appearing at the 9-12 o'clock position. The letters develop slightly with the L becoming an I and later the following B becoming an O so that it reads AZZO then AZZOIO. The next issue has plain Va  before the horse (49) (a few have heart mark too). One variant has Bha and an irregular legend. The third issue is baser and has the pellet on the obverse over the Va  (50). This is followed by issues with Va replaced by a nandipada or Am  (51). This series undergoes a further debasement and the obverse monogram becomes  or  (52). This is immediately followed by the copper coins of Aspavarma with the same control monogram/letters, but surprisingly, with restored correct legends for Azes (Mitchiner Vol. 7, 898c). Some drachms with Azes legends, but bearing types of HELMETED Zeus Nikephoros on the reverse have the same  monogram on the reverse (53). These coins are often very base or copper with a silver wash and in several hoards that I have seen/bought are found with the last posthumous Azes coins detailed above, or with Abdagases coins. Abdagases issued practically no drachms in his own name, but these very common drachms seem to have circulated as small denomination alongside his tetradrachms.

There are other links within the above series such as the use of letters such as Pra, or additional nandipada – see table. An off-shoot of the last series are the coins bearing a star and though it has little bearing on the Gondopharid succession they are included in the table to show their relationship to the aforementioned series. Some Abdagases coins, when in extremely fine condition exhibit a tiny rose of dots or circle surrounded by dots in their design, e.g.,  (see 45) and eventually there may prove to be a connection with these and the 'star' series.



One other Pallas issue exists that was struck by Gondophares that doesn't have a clear Azes prototype. It has monogram  +  (54). The early coins are broad and of fairly good silver but they get dummier as they get baser. The drapery behind Pallas also changes shape from being square-ended to having longer tassels (55). The final group has the monogram thus:  and the drapery is two long lines. On the obverse the letter Sa  appears below the horse. It was issued from early in Gondophares occupation until his demise and not adopted by his successors. The latest of the latter coins appear to be as base as the posthumous Pallas coins of Azes with monogram  + nandipada + Va + Bra (43) whereas the earliest variety is contemporary with the first posthumous Azes Pallas issues (48) according to silver content by visual appearance.







(B) The Zeus Nikephoros series (see table 2 - right side).






The Azes coinage with Zeus Nikephoros reverse type is vast and very complicated. Apart from simple division into rajarajasa and rajatirajasa groups, there are series which consist only of drachms, others of only tetradrachms and some, like the 'helmeted Zeus' base coins, are definitely posthumous. It is very difficult to determine with some coins whether they are posthumous or not, the ZN (Zeus Nikephoros) coins seem to have outlasted the contemporary Pallas series for a considerable period. The one series that is imitated by the Gondopharids is that bearing the monogram  accompanied by B  and Bu  (56). The majority of this coinage bearing the 'rajatirajasa' legend is probably posthumous and can be classified in some detail according to the form of sceptre held by Zeus, the form of the diadem ties and the appearance of Kharosthi letters before the king's face. In several hoards the later baser varieties are found alongside coins of Abdagases and were probably struck concurrently. At this period the form of the legends on the obverse undergoes a change on the non-Azes-named varieties. BACILEWC is replaced by BACILEYONTOC on the coins of Abdagases, Sases and the small group of independent kings. The first issue is of Abdagases with monogram  + B + Bu (PMC 64). This is either accompanied by, or followed by the series with Va in place of Bu (57). Sases issued some of the same coins, the earliest of which differ only in name from those of Abdagases, the die-cutter being the same man for both coins, so identical are they (58). It would seem that the transfer of power from Abdagases to Sases was not a peaceful one. Sases issued a further series with monogram  which are baser than his first issue (59) and a copper drachm-only issue was struck in the name of his successor Aspavarma (60). Contemporary with Sases issues are those of Mamvadesa (61) and Arsakes Dikaioy(?) (62) with the same monogram and letters in the field. The Arsakes coin is in copper and he also struck other coins in copper with the letters B and Va replaced by the symbol  (Mitchiner vol. 7, 895). A further variety has the additional epithet 'Jayatasa' or 'Victorious' (ibid. 896), which only occurs elsewhere on the coins of Aspavarma (whose coins are contemporary) and some small drachms with Pallas reverse of uncertain ruler. If, as shown, Abdagases follows Azes immediately or within a small lapse of time then it goes to show that his uncle Gondophares must have been a contemporary of Azes, since he precedes Abdagases.

At this point it is worth mentioning the Rajuvula coin with ZN reverse (63). In style it comes towards the end of Azes' reign but is not so base that it can be shown to be posthumous. We shall see that Rajuvula is succeeded by Gondophares in Jammu and by his son, Sodasa, elsewhere. The Mathura slab of Amohini gives a date for Sodasa as mahaksatrapa in the Azes era-year 42 (CHIran p.22, though other authorities read it as year 72). This is equivalent to 16 B.C. and Sodasa issued coins as Satrap **before** this date, probably for some time after he succeeded his father. Rajuvula could certainly have ruled in the period c. 35 B.C., or just after.

(C) Zeus right series. See table 2 (left side).

As mentioned previously, this type developed from an Azes KMS type and on the introduction of the KMW obverse was adopted alongside the Pallas and ZN reverse in the initial stages. Most cataloguers have noted that there are two major stylistic differences in the reverse type; the sceptre of Zeus ends in a trident (36) on one group and ends in three balls on the other (64, 23). The 3-ball type seems baser than the trident group and is linked not only by the reverse monogram  and letter Si  to one of the Pallas series, but is also in the same distinctive style. It appears that the Pallas issue followed the Zeus issue in this case.

It is the trident group that provides the prototype for the Gondophares and Abdagases coins. The drapery is depicted in the same way and there is a monogram and legend link through some very rare and short-lived Azes variants. One variant of the trident type with monogram  with 'rajatirajasa' legend (65) as on the Gondophares coins and a drachm variety (66) has monogram  which is the monogram used by Gondophares. Another, baser tetradrachm of Azes with Zeus right has the same monogram but 3-ball ending sceptre (67). The Gondophares coins with Zeus right ALL have this monogram  but accompanied by another monogram in the right field, either Vhre  alone or with the addition of Ra  or Bu  (68,9, 70). The last two might indicate a link with the ZN coinage of Azes or Abdagases.

Abdagases uses the monogram  at first on two issues which have references to his relationship with Gondophares in the obverse legend. The coins were probably issued while the latter was still regnant. One issue has Vhresa  in the right field. (71) and the other has monogram  + a Kharosthi control letter (72). This latter seems to be directly following a late Azes issue of ZN reverse type with  +  (73). Whenever a nandipada appears on Azes coins it seems to be connected with his latest issues or positively posthumous issues.

## SAGALA and further East.

The Indo-Greek coinage of Jammu/Sagala finished with Strato III (ONS Newsletter 128, 1991) and Rajuvula issued a silver currency (74) probably as a usurper during his reign rather than as successor. The final coinage of this area was issued by Bhadrasya. These coins are of not very base silver and would have been acceptable alongside Azes' coins. To the south-east around Sarhind, Rajuvula issued a base drachm coinage (75) with lead lower denominations (76). The base silver coins were debased to copper and he was then succeeded by Gondophares (see Coin Hoards VII, hoard 439) (77). Lead coins are also known for Gondophares (78). The successors of Gondophares are known also in this copper drachm series, Abdagases (79) and then Sases (80). As shown previously the base drachms with helmeted ZN reverse circulated alongside the Abdagases coinage and lead coins with the same monograms and letters as these and bearing the name Azes were, I believe, issued as a lower denomination somewhere in this locality (81). After Sases come the coins of Sarpedanés (82) and Ybouzanes (83) which are in a different and neater style.

Of great interest are the reverse legends on these coins. Gondophares is called either Gudapharasa or Gudavharasa, Sases is called Gudavhara Sasasa, Sarpedanés is Gudavhara Sapedanasa and Ybouzanes is Gudavhara Gadanasa. The name given in the Takht-i-Bahi inscription is Gudavhara NOT Gudapharasa and here we have the final evidence perhaps that the first Gondophares was not intended in this inscription. It could be any of these later kings.

If the succession here was Abdagases - Sases - Sarpedanés (possibly more than one if the Arachosian coinage is an indicator) and Ybouzanes, then, assuming Azes died c. 25 - 20 B.C., we could reasonably assume that the first two would fill the gap until 19 A.D. when the Takht-i-Bahi Gondophares began his reign. Since there are Seistan drachms in the name of Ybouzanes and they closely resemble those of the Parthian monarchs Vologases II (c. A.D. 77 - 80) and Pacorus II (c. A.D. 78 - 105) placing him a little too late, I would suggest that, if the Takht-i-Bahi inscription IS dated in the Azes era then it refers most probably to (one of the) Gondophares Sarpedanés! Coins 84 and 85 show the portraits of Sarpedanés from Arachosia.

## CONCLUSION

Even though I have not given all of my evidence in full in order to reduce the size of this paper, I believe that I have shown that:

- (a) There was ONE king called Azes and that the Azes era named after him precludes his surviving into the 1st century A.D.
- (b) That he was succeeded by Gondophares and his nephew Abdagases immediately in some areas and before his death in others.
- (c) That Gondophares I's Seistan coinage was inspired in the middle of the 1st century B.C. by those of contemporary Parthian kings.
- (d) That his Arachosian coins were countermarked at the same time as the 'Orodes' and Phraates IV coins were countermarked, sometime in the 4th or 5th decade B.C.
- (e) That Gondophares succeeded Rajuvula in the 4th or 3rd decade B.C.
- (f) That there were several kings who used the name (title) Gondophares and that the Takht-i-Bahi inscription refers to one of these later kings and thus it is one of these later kings who met St. Thomas, if the Apocryphal Acts are to be believed.

## POSTSCRIPT

If we can accept the above then we need to re-order all the other coins of this period. Kujula Kadphises overstruck coins of Gondophares as did Zeionises. Gondophares overstruck coins of posthumous Hermaios. All these events can now be placed at the end of the 1st century B.C. Sases overstruck coins of Nahapana (Mitchiner Indo-Greeks Vol 8, type 1104 coin 6) who we know was ruling in year 46. This must now be dated in the AZES era and not the SAKA! This would place Nahapana B.C. and suggest that all the Western Satrapal coinage has been placed far too late, perhaps 135 years too late! In fact, two kings previous to Nahapana was Aghudaka whose coins have as their obverse type a Nike that on some coins is identical to that on some coins of Abdagases of Kabul - valley type. The provenance of the coin in my collection was Afghanistan. The dating of Kanishka's era has caused so many problems that several symposia have been called to settle the question, so far without conclusive result. The Saka era of A.D. 78, rejected so far by so many scholars in the past as being the Kanishka era not only becomes a possibility, but a probability. If, as I now believe, we have a more concrete basis for ordering the coinage of the Sakas and Gondopharids, we must look at the dating of the coinage of the Kushan anew as well as the Western Satraps, Guptas and contemporary dynasties.

R.C. Senior  
June 1991.

## ONS Occasional Paper No. 25. Errata.

(please moisten back and attach to page 12)

- illustrations 11, 12 transposed.
- illustrations 13, 14 transposed.
- insert (14) after 'issue' in line 10, p. 3.
- p. 4, line 5: (30) not (3)
- p. 4, line 41: (38) not (3)
- p. 4, line 49: Kujula not 'Kajula'
- illustration 59, obv./rev. transposed.