

# **INTRODUCTION TO NUMISMATICS**

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**Introduction to Numismatics**

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**Unit - I**

Value of Numismatics for Historical Reconstruction - Origin and evolution of coinage in India.

**Unit - II**

Punch Marked coins – Foreign Coins: Coinage of the Indo-Greeks – Roman Coins - Coinage of the Kushanas - Sakas and Kshatrapas.

**Unit - III**

Coins of Satavahanas - Sangam age coins - Coins of Chera, Chola, Pandyas - Gupta Coinage.

**Unit - IV**

Medieval South Indian Coins - Coins of Pallavas – Coins of Imperial Cholas - Coins of Cheras - Imperial Pandyas.

**Unit - V**

Coinage of the Vijayanagara Dynasty

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**UNIT - I**

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**Value of Numismatics for Historical Reconstruction**

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**Structure**

## Learning Objectives

## 1.1 Value of Numismatics for Historical Reconstruction

1.1.1: Political Importance

1.1.2: Geographical Importance

1.1.3: Economic Importance

1.1.4: Religious Importance

1.1.5: Technological Importance

1.1.6: Techniques of Coinage in India

## 1.2 Origin and Evolution of Coinage in India

1.2.1: The Concept of a Coinage Tradition in India

1.2.2: Greek Influence

1.2.3: The Role of Coin Design in the Indian Tradition

## Key Points

Do you know?

Chapter Check-up

Glossary

**Learning Objectives***After going through this unit you should be able to*

- Know and understand the importance of Numismatics to understand the history of ancient India.
- Understand the techniques of coinage.
- Trace the distinguishing features of Indian coins and the Greek influence on Indian coinage.

## 1.1 Value of Numismatics for Historical Reconstruction

Numismatics, as we all know is the study of the coins that are used by our ancestors. In India, the study of coins is significant that it not only confirms history but also amplifies it. Prior to the Muhammadan conquests there was no connected written history in India and we have to construct it with the materials at our disposal. Along with the indigenous and foreign accounts, Numismatics and Epigraphy are equally important which help us in filling the gaps of history. Some events that are not mentioned in the inscriptions or any other records can be traced from the coins. For instance, the Allahabad pillar inscription has no evidence of Samudra Gupta performing an Asvamedha sacrifice but the Asvamedha coins issued by him informs us about this event.

### 1.1.1 Political Importance

Is it possible for someone to study and understand ancient India without studying about the coins? No. Studying coins help us to reconstruct the the political and administrative history of India. For instance, “*Yaudheya ganasya (vi)jaya*” (Victory to the Yaudheya Republic) – found on a legend gives us a glimpse into the ancient republic state or territory in India.



- Obverse: Unicephalic Karttikeya standing facing, holding a spear in his right hand, with a rooster to right; Brahmi legend *Yaudheya-ganasya jaya* around.
- Reverse: Goddess Devasena (consort of Karttikeya) standing left with one hand extended; dotted border around
- Ref: Singh A1; MACW 4707-4710  
[https://encrypted-tbn3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcR5hJdjxdMV\\_-86TJBkQNsC96w6UmyFGrKfQPtAFGyRegdqM6iM](https://encrypted-tbn3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcR5hJdjxdMV_-86TJBkQNsC96w6UmyFGrKfQPtAFGyRegdqM6iM)

Without the help of the coins, the Indo – Bactrian, Greek, Indo – Scythian, Indo – Parthian and Kushana coins, the political settlements of north India from 250 BCE to 300 CE would never obtain place in the history. The accounts of the famous Greek historians like Justin and Strabo

mention only four or five princes ruling for half a century. But the study of their coins reveals thirty seven such princes who ruled for over a period of two and a half centuries.

The importance of coins for reconstructing history is more evident in case of the Indo – Scythians who were the contemporaneous potentates of the Greeks. No historian, Indian or foreign has preserved any reminiscences about these rulers. Coins alone introduced Vanones, Spahrises, Spalahores, Spalagadames, azes I, Azilises and Azes II and enabled us to fix their succession order. The Indo – Scythians were over thrown by the Indo – Parthians. There is an epigraph mentioning Gondophares as the founder of this dynasty but what about his successors like Ahalgases, Orthagnes, Pakores and others? Only through their coins we know that these kings existed. We are lucky enough to have a large possession of Kushana inscriptions. The Kushana kings like Kanishka, Huvishka and Vasudeva issued some inscriptions. No one actually knows about their immediate successors Kujala Kadphises and Wema Kadphises who propagated the Kushana supremacy until their coins were recovered.

Another significant service of the Numismatics to the Indian history is in connection with the Western Kshatrapas who ruled Kathiawar and Malwa. Chastana (Trasthenos of Ozone (Ujjain)) was identified as the founder of this dynasty and Ptolemy assigned his rule to c. 130 CE. Many Kshatrapa rulers not only inscribed their name and title on the coins but also specified the date which enables us determine the exact year of the successor. Here, it is interesting to note that a keen study of Kshatrapa coins one can understand the three occasions where the direct line from Chastana broke.

### 1.1.2 Geographical Importance

The find spots of the coins and the localities in which they were circulated shed light on the historical geography and the political sway of the rulers. The exact locations of the Yaudheyas, Arjunayanas and Audumbaras were determined on the basis of their coins. The migrations of various republic states also recorded with the help of the coins. The Sibis migrated to Rajasthan with the Malavas whose original house is Punjab which is evident from their coins from Chittor and Tambavathi Nagari.



Sibi Janapada (200 BC) 🏹, Copper Unit, Obv: a fish bone like figure (Indra's Bajra) and a Swastika in the center with taurine? attached to each corner, Brahmi legend "(Majhamikaya) Sibi Janapadasa", Rev: six-arched hill with crescent (chaitya) with a wavy line below.

Ref: Handa # Pl. XXXII- 5. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=565425042036700&set=pb.100057076285277.- 2207520000>

### 1.1.3 Economic Importance

The economic stability or the economic history can be understood from the study of the coins. The gold coins of the Gupta and Vijayanagara coins that are found in good quantity conclude that these periods are prosperous. The trade and commerce of India with other countries like Rome are attested by the large number of gold coins found in different places of India. The quality of the gold and silver coins reflects the economic conditions and the artistic skills of the country. Purity of the coins provides significant insights about the flourishing and troubled times of different dynasties. For example, the debased gold coins of the late Gupta period and the Vijayanagara period helps one to understand the economic prosperity as well as the decline in the economy during the disintegration period.

### 1.1.4 Religious Importance

The religious glory of the Indian soil since ancient times has attracted many foreigners. The Indianisation of many foreign clans like the Sakas, Pahlavas, Kushanas etc. can be seen from the coins issued by these rulers. The hoards discovered in various parts of India serve as a testimony for the fact that many foreign chieftains have embraced either Buddhism

or Hinduism in India. Their coins prove that they were eclectic in their religious beliefs. Kanishka issued the coins bearing the Greek legends and the figures of Mitraic Zoroastrian and Hindu gods. The Gandhara School of art produced legends of Buddha in the Indian position and the Greek costume.



Gold coin of Kanishka with Buddha in Greek letters. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/48/Coin\\_of\\_Kanishka\\_I.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/48/Coin_of_Kanishka_I.jpg)

### 1.1.5 Technological Importance

The development of science and technology in making coins can be traced with the study of coins belonging to different periods. Initially, coins were made solely for circulation replacing the exchange system. Later on, inscribing names and territories on the coin and the kings who issued the coins were also added. Artistic excellence added beauty to the coins and the content in the coins has diversified them as the coins of political, religious or linguistic significance. By studying the development in the coin making techniques, one can understand the metals and alloys used and several techniques in minting them. It is interesting to note that various dynasties in ancient India have minted their own coins and each of them have used the metals, alloys and minting techniques that differ from each other. The processes involved in making moulds and casting techniques can be understood from studying the coins more scientifically.

### 1.1.6 Techniques of Coinage in India

Coins are significant to understand the technology of Indian coinage because no classic text refers to minting in ancient times. We come across some inscriptions which rarely mention the technical terms that are connected to minting in India.



The following are some of the techniques used in India during the ancient times.

- **Punch – Mark technique**
- **Droplet technique**
- **Moulding technique** – Single mould / Multiple moulds
- **Casting technique** - The Bent – Bar or Wheel marked
- **Repose technique**
- **Die striking technique** – Single strike / Double strike



The technique of casting coins in ancient India. [https://m.media-amazon.com/images/I/71n4O6oStsL.\\_SL1500\\_.jpg](https://m.media-amazon.com/images/I/71n4O6oStsL._SL1500_.jpg)

## 1.2 Origin and Evolution of Coinage in India

What are coins? What is their history? To trace the history of the coins, one must look back into the history of mankind. Man, in the remote past had limited needs like food, shelter and clothes which were offered by the nature. These basic amenities were confined to the man himself or his family. Thus, he never had the necessity to make efforts for anything else. Gradually, when families grouped with the other families in the neighbourhood, tribes or communities were formed. These tribes when they come in contact with the other tribes of other regions came to know about the produce of that region and introduced their products to them. These tribes were interested in acquiring the products which are new to them and the practice of exchanging goods was introduced.





<https://businessjargons.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/barter-system-characteristics.jpg>

Later, these tribes settled in large numbers, their localities grew in size and the system of trade was introduced. Initially, they traded their own products with those of others. They used barter system where they can exchange their surplus with the other communities. This system is product oriented and soon people realised that in order to exchange their surplus they are ending up with high costs. It is because certain commodities got higher values in the society. Imagine someone exchanging eggs for chicken or rice for gold!

Thus, fixing a common commodity for all the transactions and standards to estimate the value of the product is introduced. These developments paved way to the evolution of coinage. The process of the trading, barter system and exchange of goods between tribes was common in all the civilizations. In India, the first people to use the agricultural products for exchange were the Indus valley people. The large granaries found in Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro strengthens this statement. Scholars opine that these granaries were used not only to store the agricultural products but also acted as banks and treasury. Cows and cattle in the pastoral communities during the Vedic period replaced agricultural products for exchange. Some passages in Rig-Veda state that the image of Indra for sale is said to be ten cows.



[https://www.thespruce.com/thmb/ksPOfwNVoe4Tfx6D2dR0PiPL-hI=/1500x0/filters:no\\_upscale\(\):max\\_bytes\(150000\):strip\\_icc\(\)/01\\_HeroHorizontal-17941540af6b42b19263541b2773f00c.jpg](https://www.thespruce.com/thmb/ksPOfwNVoe4Tfx6D2dR0PiPL-hI=/1500x0/filters:no_upscale():max_bytes(150000):strip_icc()/01_HeroHorizontal-17941540af6b42b19263541b2773f00c.jpg)



[https://www.inventiva.co.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/rice-sixteen\\_nine-sixteen\\_nine.jpg](https://www.inventiva.co.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/rice-sixteen_nine-sixteen_nine.jpg)

[https://cdn.dnaindia.com/sites/default/files/styles/full/public/2022/03/10/1032104-999033-916527-gold-price.jpg?im=Resize=\(640,360\)](https://cdn.dnaindia.com/sites/default/files/styles/full/public/2022/03/10/1032104-999033-916527-gold-price.jpg?im=Resize=(640,360))

“क इमं दशभिर्ममेन्द्रं क्रीणाति धेनुभिः ।” - Who will buy this Indra (image) of mine with ten cows? - **Rigveda » Mandal:4» Sukta:24» Mantra:10.**

Another passage mentions about a sage who denied selling the image of Indra even for hundred or thousand cows. Treasure and wealth in the Vedic period was nothing but the cows. The Vedic people traded *soma* plant for cows. Aitareya brahmana refers to giving cows as a fee for wrong doings. The father of Sunahsepa, received 100 cows when he sold his son to Harischandra for a sacrifice. He even accepted to kill his own son for other hundred cows. Cows were given as *dakshina* to the *ritvikas* (priests) in the later Vedic period.

The terms in the Vedic literature like *suvarna*, *hiranya*, *rajata*, etc were used to refer to the metals and in the later course of time *hiranya* is used for 'cash' whereas the word *meya* is used for payments in 'kind'. The following are the other terms referred in the classical texts.

- *Krishnala* – a measuring unit mentioned in *Taittiriya Brahmana*.
- *Raktika or Gunja* – also known as *ratti*.
- *Mana* – a term used for transactions in *Satapatha Brahmana*.
- *Satamana* – round metallic piece (100 units)
- *Pada* – metallic piece of a metal with standard weight referred in *Brihadaranyakopanishad*.
- *Hiranya – pinda* – metallic pieces used in transactions.
- *Nishka* – mentioned in a hymn of Rigveda that king Bhavya gave ten horses and ten *nishkas* to Rishi Kakshivat.
- *Karshapana & Sana* – minted coins mentioned in *Asthadhyayi*. *Asthadhyayi* of Panini refers to a *sutra*, explaining about minting of coins that are stamped (*ahata*) with symbols (*rupa*). Thus, the developments throughout these centuries affirm that the making of coins originated in India long before the time of *Asthadhyayi* (c.6 – 5 BCE). According to Parameswari Lal Gupta, "coins have originated in India at least a century before Lydia and China".

### 1.2.1 The concept of a Coinage Tradition in India

The concept of coinage tradition is used by many modern numismatists to aid their understanding of continuity in the development of coinage within particular cultures. A coinage tradition can represent a common tradition in terms of the monetary role of coinage as well as in terms of the technology used to produce it and the visual vocabulary of coin design. The function of a coinage tradition has a firm place in the monetary function of coinage. Coins can function as money because they are part of a system. The system enables individuals making and receiving a payment to hold a shared view of their value and acceptability for the purposes of that payment and of the broad range of payments in which they expect to participate in the future. Tradition helps shape that system guarantees its operation and ensures its continuity.

India's coinage tradition has existed for well over two thousand years. Its origins reach back some centuries earlier than the arrival of the western coinage tradition. The most distinguishing feature of the tradition is the

continued production and use of coinage in India throughout these two thousand years and more. The most characteristic features are the repeated reemergence of square-shaped coins throughout that time and the preference for symbolic rather than representational designs. The use of square coins and of symbolic designs can be traced back to the silver punch marked coinage, India's earliest phase of coinage. The most-commonly encountered punch-marked coins were often made from cut-up sheets of silver, hence their rectangular shape, and were stamped with five small symbols.



Round and square punch marked coins. <https://www.classicalnumismaticgallery.com/images/products/AUC42/large/5.jpg>

Contemporary with the punch-marked silver coins, there were also square copper coins made by casting with similar symbolic designs. The squareness and the use of symbolic designs are features which are unusual in most other coinage traditions, where most coins are round and designs are representational, heraldic or inscriptional. The Indian tradition has furthermore shown a distinctive ability to adopt and absorb aspects of foreign coinage traditions. This readiness is undoubtedly a response to the imperative created by numerous invading and trading forces carrying new coinage ideas into India.

### 1.2.2 Greek influence

The earliest clearly identifiable external influence to have an impact on the Indian coinage tradition was the spread of coins of the Greek tradition into the north-western corner of the sub-continent during the period when the silver punch-marked coinage was beginning to be made and used in India. Greek coins appear to have first penetrated into this region during the period of its rule by the Iranian Achaemenid kings. Greek coins



circulated as monetary bullion into Afghanistan during the century before Alexander the Great put an end to Achaemenid rule in the region during 329-7 BC. Coins of Alexander have also been found in northern Pakistan. After the death of Alexander the issue and circulation of coins of the Greek tradition in the Greek kingdoms in the territories of modern Afghanistan and Pakistan during the third to first centuries BC gradually increased the influence of Greek coinage designs, technologies and denomination systems on the Indian coinage tradition.



Gold coin of Kanishka I, with a depiction of the Buddha, with the legend "Boddo" in Greek script; [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/48/Coin\\_of\\_Kanishka\\_I.jpg/520px-Coin\\_of\\_Kanishka\\_I.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/48/Coin_of_Kanishka_I.jpg/520px-Coin_of_Kanishka_I.jpg)

### 1.2.3 The role of Coin Design in the Indian Tradition

The longevity of many coin designs within the Indian coinage tradition has created another characteristic feature distinguishing it from the coinage traditions of Europe and the Islamic World. The retention of features which have long ceased to have a function relevant to the identity of the issuer has served to detach Indian coinage from the strongly political nature of most European and Islamic coin designs. In Europe, from Greek times, the use of portraits, religious imagery, heraldic devices and inscriptions has been systematically used to identify the issuing authority responsible for the production of coinage and its circulation. In the Islamic world the inscriptional designs refer to the authority of the Islamic religion of those producing and regulating coin issues and normally also name the mint and date of issue and later the ruler responsible. Under Greek and transformed Greek and later Islamic and European influence the concept of making designs to identify the issuer are not alien to the Indian coinage tradition, but the main purpose of coin design in India has often been separated from this function. In several contexts the identity of the issuer is completely absent from the coin. The most extreme examples are the

imitation-Sasanian issues of western India, which continue for about seven centuries without systematic indication of the issuer, either by dynasty, royal name or mint name. The function of the design seems to be simply to identify the coin as current money. The closer the design is to that of earlier coins the better it corresponds to this purpose. ([https://www.academia.edu/1563408/The\\_Origins\\_of\\_the\\_Indian\\_Coinage\\_Tradition](https://www.academia.edu/1563408/The_Origins_of_the_Indian_Coinage_Tradition))

The coins of India have three distinguishing features which make them unique among the coins of the other parts of the world. They are; a) The metals used for coins in India, b) Names of the coins and denominations and c) The weight standards in ancient India. These distinctive qualities made the Indian coinage more interesting for the foreign scholars. Metals like Gold, silver, copper, lead, tin, brass and bronze were used for making coins in India. It is significant to know that the Indian coin makers knew alloy; the composition of various metals. Kautilya refers to a *Karshapana* made of 25% copper and 6 ¼ % base metals like lead are mixed with silver to increase the revenue of the state. The inscriptions issued by various dynasties and individuals refer to some of the denominations prevalent in their territories. The inscriptions referring to the transactions such as sale or lease of lands and villages, collection and remission of taxes had the names of the coins and their denominations. In South India and Deccan many inscriptions have the coin names and denominations. *Gadyana*, *varaha*, *mada* were famous in South India. In the Chola and Pandyan territories the *madai* was a standard coin with 63 grains weight. *Kalanju* was also equal to *mada* in Cholanadu. *Pon* is another term denoting coin in the early Vijayanagara period. The gold coin of the Maratha Emperor Sivaji is *Hun. Pratapa* was another coin introduced during the Vijayanagara period which is equal to two varahas of 26 grains each.

As mentioned earlier, Masa, Karshapana and Krishala were different units of weight. The Kushanas have chosen the weight of a Roman Dinar for their gold coins. The kingdoms such as the Guptas, Chalukyas of Badami and the Vijayanagara rulers issued gold coins weighing 117 to 120 grains. The other dynasties which could not issue such heavy coins issued half of their weight i.e., 57 to 67 grains. Thus, the weight and purity of the coins determined the economic prosperity of the kingdom and the extension of the empire can be understood with the circulation of the coins in other territories.

### *Key Points*

- Numismatics, is the study of the coins that are used by our ancestors. Numismatics and Epigraphy are equally important in filling the gaps of history. Some events that are not mentioned in the inscriptions or any other records can be traced from the coins.
- Studying coins help us to reconstruct the political and administrative history of India. Without the help of the coins, the Indo – Bactrian, Greek, Indo – Scythian, Indo – Parthian and Kushana coins, the political settlements of north India from 250 BCE to 300 CE would never obtain place in the history.
- The find spots of the coins and the localities in which they were circulated shed light on the historical geography and the political sway of the rulers. The economic stability or the economic history can be understood from the study of the coins. The quality of the gold and silver coins reflects the economic conditions and the artistic skills of the country. Purity of the coins provides significant insights about the flourishing and troubled times of different dynasties.
- The Indianisation of many foreign clans like the Sakas, Pahlavas, Kushanas etc. can be seen from the coins issued by these rulers. various dynasties in ancient India have minted their own coins and each of them have used the metals, alloys and minting techniques that differ from each other. The processes involved in making moulds and casting techniques can be understood from studying the coins more scientifically.
- The early Indians used barter system where they can exchange their surplus with the other communities. This system is product oriented and soon people realised that in order to exchange their surplus they are ending up with high costs. It is because certain commodities got higher values in the society.
- Cows and cattle in the pastoral communities during the Vedic period replaced agricultural products for exchange. Some passages in Rig-Veda state that the image of Indra for sale is said to be ten cows.

- *Asthadhyayi* of Panini refers to a *sutra*, explaining about minting of coins that are stamped (*ahata*) with symbols (*rupa*). India's coinage tradition has existed for well over two thousand years. The most distinguishing feature of the tradition is the continued production and use of coinage in India throughout these two thousand years and more.
- Greek coins appear to have first penetrated into this region during the period of its rule by the Iranian Achaemenid kings. After the death of Alexander the issue and circulation of coins of the Greek tradition in the Greek kingdoms in the territories of modern Afghanistan and Pakistan during the third to first centuries BC gradually increased the influence of Greek coinage designs, technologies and denomination systems on the Indian coinage tradition.
- The coins of India have three distinguishing features which make them unique among the coins of the other parts of the world. They are; a) The metals used for coins in India, b) Names of the coins and denominations and c) The weight standards in ancient India.

#### *Do you know?*

##### ***What is Numismatics?***

Numismatics is the study of the physical embodiment of various payment media (i.e. currencies). The study of numismatics as it applies to coins is often in the research of the production and use of the coins to determine their rarity. Numismatics is the study of coins and other currency units and is usually associated with the appraisal and collection of rare coins. Numismatists study the physical properties, production technology, and historical context of specimens of currency. Rare and collectible coins may trade at well above their nominal face value or commodity melt value and are often withdrawn from circulation and viewed as investments rather than actual money. Numerous clubs, societies, and other organizations have been established to support the study of numismatics.



The first English usage of the word “numismatics” was in 1829, stemming from the word adjective numismatic, which translates to “of coins”, and stemmed from the French word *numismatiques*, which itself derived from the Latin word *numismatis*. Numismatists study the physical technology and historical context of coinage and money. Coins or other tokens that are rare or unique or that have some special history that can be documented are considered most interesting for study and valuable as collectibles. Specimens that show errors from their production process of striking the coins or printing the notes are especially notable.

### Fields of Study

Because there are many types of currency, coins, and notes, the field of numismatics has been segmented into various subfields. Each subfield focuses on a specific type of numismatic collectible. Some of the most common are notaphily, exonumia, and scripophily. Notaphily is the study and collection of paper money. Notaphily is a combination of the Latin word “nota”, meaning “paper money”, and the Greek word *phily*, meaning “love”.

### “What Is Notaphily?”

Notaphilists collect paper money, including banknotes. Exonumia is the study and collection of coins, including tokens, medals, and other like objects. Exonumia is a combination of the Greek word *exo*, meaning “out of”, and “nummus”, meaning “coin.” These items are used in place of currency or used to commemorate events and accomplishments. Exonumia is largely focused on commemorative military medals, awarded for contributions in war and military expeditions.

Scripophily is the study of securities, such as stocks and bond certificates. Scripophily combines the Greek word for love and the English word, “scrip”, for ownership. Scripophilists generally collect these instruments for their beauty, rarity, and historical significance. Because the issuance of stock certificates is largely an antiquated practice, this hobby is much harder to engage in than the others subfields.

### How to Become a Numismatist

A numismatist, also known as a coin grader, is a professional who collects, analysis, and assesses the quality of collectible coins, currency, and other like objects. In the United States, prospective numismatists must join the American Numismatic Association (ANA), complete prescribed courses, and pass an exam.

### Numismatic Fun Facts

Florence, Italy, was the first world city to mint its own gold coins, in the year 1252. Although collecting old coins is a global hobby practiced by the masses, in ancient times, it was deemed a royal hobby, solely enjoyed by kings and queens. The United States Secret Service, established in 1865, was originally created to fight counterfeit money, during a time when one-third of federally issued paper money was thought to be fake. It wasn't until 1902 that the Secret Service shifted its responsibility to protecting the president, following the assassination of President William McKinley.

### What Is Numismatic Gold?

Numismatic gold refers to collectible gold coins that hold more value than the spot or current market price of gold. The increased value is largely due to rarity, age, and other factors.

### What Does Numismatic Value Mean?

Numismatic value is the value a seller receives for the sale of a collectible coin.

This value is determined by the coin's quality, rarity, and demand.

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/n/numismatics.asp#:~:text=Numismatics%20is%20the%20study%20of%20coins%20and%20other%20currency%20units,context%20of%20specimens%20of%20currency.>

### Chapter Check-up

1. Numismatics is significant for the reconstruction of History. Explain.
2. Discuss about the evolution of coinage in India.
3. What is the Greek influence in the Indian Coinage system.

## Short Answers

1. Barter system.
2. Different coin making techniques of ancient India.
3. Different terms referring to the coins or currency in the classical texts.

## Glossary

**Krishnala** – a measuring unit mentioned in *Taitariya Brahmana*.

**Raktika or Gunja** – also known as *ratti*.

**Mana** – a term used for transactions in *Satapatha Brahmana*.

**Satamana** – round metallic piece (100 units)

**Pada** – metallic piece of a metal with standard weight referred in *Brihadaranyakopanishad*.

**Hiranya – pinda** – metallic pieces used in transactions.

**Nishka** – mentioned in a hymn of Rigveda that king Bhavya gave ten horses and ten *nishkas* to Rishi Kakshivat.

**Karshapana & Sana** – minted coins mentioned in *Asthadhyayi*.

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## UNIT - II

### Punch Marked Coins

#### Structure

#### Learning Objectives

- 2.1 Punch Marked Coins
  - 2.1.1 Punch Marked Coins in South India
- 2.2 Foreign Coins - Coinage of Indo – Greeks
- 2.3 Roman Coins
- 2.4 Coinage of the Kushanas
- 2.5 Sakas and Kshatrapa Coins

#### Key Points

#### Do you know?

#### Chapter Check-up

#### Glossary

#### Learning Objectives

*After going through this unit you should be able to*

- Know and understand the historical importance of Punch marked coins.
- Understand the influence and introduction of foreign coins in India.
- Trace the distinguishing features of Indo – Greek coins and the Roman coins and their significance in filling gaps in the Indian history.
- Discuss about the Saka and Kshatrapa coins.

#### 2.1 Punch Marked Coins

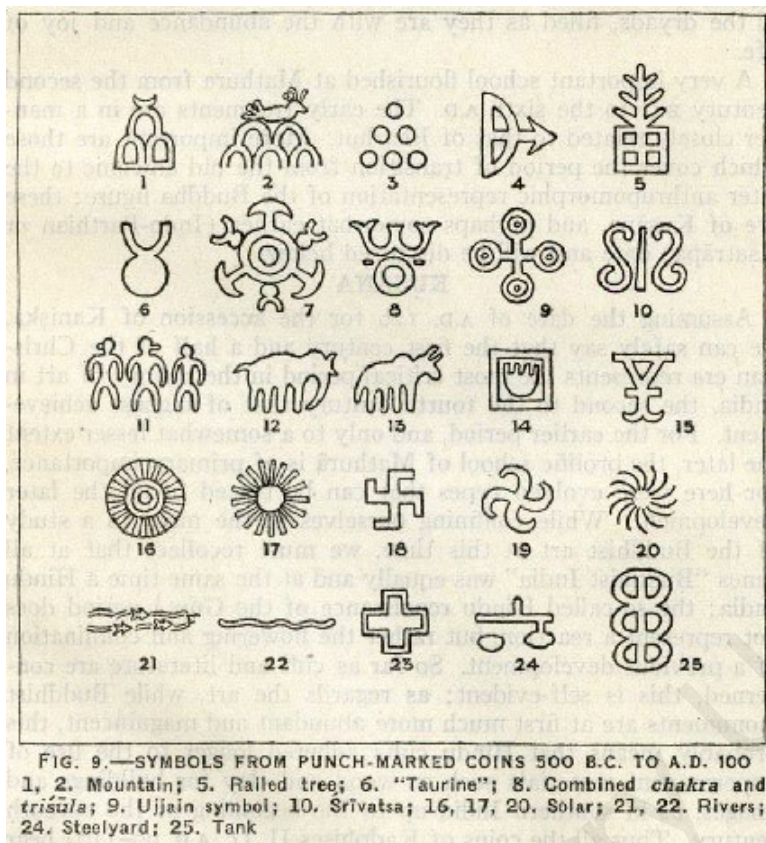
The punch marked coins are the early coins made of silver which were in circulation in ancient India before the Christian era. Kautilya in his Arthashastra refers in a passage about *Kutarpakaraka* (coin counter - feiter) and a list of objects used in the making of the coins. He mentions that the

metal was first melted in *musha* (cubicles) and melted with *kshara* (alkalis). They are then beaten into sheets (*adhikarni*) with a hammer and cut into pieces with clippers. These raw coins are then punched with stamps or dies having *bimba – tanka* (symbols). Here it is significant to note that this technique is used all over the world even today.

The punch marked coins are in different shapes such as round, oval and elliptical. The ancient coins generally bore one symbol and the number of the symbols increased later to two more in the later course of time. The punching devices are unique to India and had no inscriptions except for a few symbols. The numismatists have identified several hundreds of symbols such as hills, trees, birds, animals, human figures etc. the coins issued in different republic states differ in variety. They are indeed different from one state to the other and one period from another.

Stamping the symbols on the coins also was an interesting aspect in ancient Indian coins. If there is only one symbol, it is placed in the centre of the coin; two symbols are placed side by side of the coin. When there are four symbols, they are stamped in two pairs. The obverse and reverse sides are the two sides of the coin. The reverse side of these coins are initially blank and have no symbols at all initially. When the obverse side is worn out, symbols were stamped on the reverse side also. The silver punch marked coins are found scattered all over the sub continent. The *janapadas* and the *mahajanapadas* of ancient India have issued coins made of different materials with hundreds of symbols.

The *janapadas* which issued the coins of their own are Magadha, Surasena, Uttara Panchala, Dakshina Panchala, Chedi, Kosala, Kasi, Malla, Vanga, Dakshina Kosala, Andhra, Asmaka, Avanti, Saurashtra, Gandhara and Kuntala. It is not easy to mention which state issued coins first but all the above mentioned *janapadas* have issued their own coins prior to the fifth century BCE. Another interesting fact is that the coins of each republic state differ from each other in execution, weight, quality and the weight. The material with which the coins are made is also different from one region to the other.



<https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Kgn80O8uERI/Tl3nyp9hj8I/AAAAAAAAADK0/7WPto96kD48/s1600/Punch+Mark+Symbols.jpg>



Punch marked coin of Surasena and Kasi Janapadas (silver). [https://image-cdn.sixbid.com/v7/lots/marudhar-arts/coins-paper-money-medals-badges-5672/punch-marked-coin-surasena-janapada-4736925.jpg?p=lot\\_xl](https://image-cdn.sixbid.com/v7/lots/marudhar-arts/coins-paper-money-medals-badges-5672/punch-marked-coin-surasena-janapada-4736925.jpg?p=lot_xl); [https://www.numismall.com/cdn/shop/products/w54221\\_600x.jpg?v=1668995845](https://www.numismall.com/cdn/shop/products/w54221_600x.jpg?v=1668995845)



The following is a list of symbols found on hundreds of punch marked coins in India. Among all the *janapadas* Magadha had issued several varieties of coins for trade,



<https://i.pinimg.com/564x/8a/c9/ce/8ac9ceca5a174f56e2a983aba1ed96f4.jpg>20



Gandhara Janapada coin with single symbol. <https://i.pinimg.com/736x/55/0b/6f/550b6ff03cc0cf239f555c5f4eca2b8a.jpg>





Chedi Janapada coin with four symbols. [https://images.vcoins.com/product\\_image/216/D/6/Da346MdFe8Y7qo2P9xQny4ZWmp59t7.jpg](https://images.vcoins.com/product_image/216/D/6/Da346MdFe8Y7qo2P9xQny4ZWmp59t7.jpg)



silver coin from the Kasi Janapada. The coin is stamped with four punches of two abstract symbols and two flowers on the obverse. <https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-jbp8PdTZcvU/W3q0-iJh3VI/AAAAAAAAAvA/XAkQ6SaVC-wMiTjM6Mf6aPeOpIdrfzj5QCLcBGAs/s200/Kashi%2BJanapada.jpg>

Coin of Magadha. The obverse design featuring a sun, a six-armed symbol, a Taurine and a Bull was created using five separate punches. The Taurine is surrounded by dots on three sides while the bull is facing right. <https://2.bp.blogspot.com/-FmScPe1wcWo/W3q0S1VjNCI/AAAAAAAAAus/PUf3pLAigFsE8DNrdXkYE1vetQlrFZNsgCLcBGAs/s200/Karshapana%2BSilver%2Bcoin.jpg>

### 2.1.1: Punch Marked Coins in South India

The Mauryan coins were seen in South India also until the minting and flow of the Mauryan coins was ceased. The republics of South India, the Pandyas issued their own coins using the punch marked technique. These coins have five symbols and they were half in the weight of the Mauryan coins. The sun and the six armed symbols were retained from the Mauryan coins and three new symbols were introduced. The Pandyans stamped a 'Fish' symbol on the reverse side of the coin which is their symbol. The Pandyan punch marked coins are discovered from Madurai area. Like the

Pandyas the Vidarbha region, the Andhras and the Deccan region also have their own punch marked coins after the downfall of the Mauryan Empire.



Pandyan punch marked coin with fish on the reverse side of the coin. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ef/Pandyan\\_bull\\_coin\\_with\\_fishes.jpg/1200px-Pandyan\\_bull\\_coin\\_with\\_fishes.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ef/Pandyan_bull_coin_with_fishes.jpg/1200px-Pandyan_bull_coin_with_fishes.jpg)

## 2.2: Foreign Coins

The true association of foreign coinage starts with the death of Alexander, the Great. His victory over the Indian territories was commemorated by *decadrachms* and *tetradrachms* in Babylonia. The territories he conquered were divided among his powerful officers caused the establishment of a powerful Greek kingdom extending from Euphrates to the Oxus and the Indus. The Greek kings such as Diodotus, Demetrius extended the kingdom up to Afghanistan. Demetrius was succeeded by Pantaleon and Agathocles. Their successor Menander who followed the Indian tradition was a powerful ruler of Gandhara. He had extended his rule up to Punjab. After the death of Eucratides and Menander, the Indo – Bactrian history is not clear. It is interesting to note that the region of Gandhara is ruled by different rulers and twenty three rulers are known from the Indo – Bactrian coins in India. They are; Amyntas, Antialkidas, Antimachus, Apollodotus, Apollophanes, Archebius, Artemidorus, Diomedes, Dionysius, Heliokles, Hermaeus, Hippostratus, Lysias, Nicias, Peucolaus, Plato, Philoxenus, Sophytes, Strato, Telephus, Theophilus, Threson and Zoilus. Gold coins were issued during the Indo – Bactrian period but were confined to Bactria. Some legendless coins of Menander are found in India which may be the earliest gold coins in the Indian soil. Copper and silver coins were very much in circulation during this period. Pantaleon and Agathocles issued Nickel coins also. The nickel coins issued by the Indo – Bactrian are the earliest in the world in this metal. Strato

II issued coins in lead. The Indo – Bactrian coins are made in silver. The coins are *didrachm* and *hemidrachm*.

The Indo Greek rulers made the coins by die striking method. This technique was unknown to India. The Greek rulers made few additions to the Indian coinage.

- The king's figure is stamped in the obverse.
- The helmeted head is usual.
- Some kings are seen wearing elephants' scalp.
- Antimachus and Antiochus are seen wearing a flat cap called *Kausia*.
- They introduced the portraits of their ancestors on the coins to commemorate them.
- Putting the bust size portraits of the parents on the coins is another significant contribution of the Greek rulers.
- The portraits on the coins are realistic and show facial features of the foreign invaders.
- They introduced the effigy of the Greek gods and goddesses on their coins. Zeus, Artemis, Heracles, Poseidon, Apollo, Dioskouroi, Nike and Pallas are stamped on the coins.
- Sometimes, the coins are issued with symbols of worship on the reverse side such as the 'two piloi' of Dioskouroi and tripod of Apollo.



Demetrius wearing an elephant scalp. [https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce\\_199\\_100/indogreekcoins/demetrios1.jpg](https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce_199_100/indogreekcoins/demetrios1.jpg)



Coin of Antialkidas depicted in a helmeted bust. Greek god Zeus on the reverse side.  
<https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/coins-of-the-indo-greek-kings-antialkidas.jpg>



“Antimachus I 174-165 B.C. AR Tetradrachm (16.50 gm; 30 mm). Balkh Mint. Diademed draped bust right wearing kausia / BASILEWS QEOU ANTIMAXOU, Poseidon standing holding trident and palm branch, monogram in field.” [https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce\\_199\\_100/indogreekcoins/antimachos1coin.jpg](https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce_199_100/indogreekcoins/antimachos1coin.jpg)





The square copper coin of Apollodotus in Greek and Kharoshthi script. "Kings of Bactria Apollodotos C.180/174-165/160, Square AR Drachm (2.40 gm.). "Basileus Apollodotoi Suthros," Indian elephant standing right, K in exergue / "**Maharajasa Apaladatasā Tradarasa**" in Karosthi, Zebu bull standing right."

[https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce\\_199\\_100/indogreekcoins/apollodotus1coin2.jpg](https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce_199_100/indogreekcoins/apollodotus1coin2.jpg)

The copper coins of Eucratides have superscription 'Kavishaye Nagara devadaa' (the city goddess of Kapisa) written in Kharoshthi. It is very interesting to note that the Greek rulers were also coming under Indian influence by this time. The coins of Agathocles made in copper found at Oxus valley bear the effigy of Vasudeva with Chakra on one side and Balarama with a plough on the other side. Another interesting feature in the coins of Hermaeus, the Greek god Zeus appears to be depicted as Ganesa with the trunk. Some of the coins have a horse rider, humped bull or zebu, a lion and a Bactrian camel. Another significant feature of the Indo – Greek coinage is the inscriptions on the coins. The coins of Diodotus and Euthydemus have Greek inscriptions on the reverse of their coins. Sometimes, the Greek inscription in the obverse side is translated and inscribed on the reverse side in Prakrit in Kharoshthi script.

Pantaleon and Agathocles used Brahmi in their coins instead of Kharoshthi. The Greek legend on the obverse side of these coins had three legends. They are i) Basilios – King, ii) one of these titles – *Sotoros, Megalou, Antiketou, Nikepkorou, Philapatoros, Epiphanou*, and iii) issuing kings' name. The Bactrian rule in India was brought to an end by the nomad hordes, the Sakas. They snatched Bactria from Heliokles in 135 BCE. The rule of Greeks in the North western regions ended in 75 BCE when Hippostratus and Hermaeus were defeated by the Yuehchi tribe. The debasement in the workmanship is clearly visible from the coins of Strato II and Hermaeus.



Hermaeus, the last Indo – Greek king. c. 40 - 1 B.C. Silver drachm, 1.774g, 16.1mm; obverse BASILEWS EWTHROS ERMAOIU, draped and diademed bust right; reverse, Karosthi legend around, Zeus enthroned slightly left, right hand extended, scepter in left, monograms left and right.”

[https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce\\_199\\_100/indogreekcoins/hermaios1.jpg](https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce_199_100/indogreekcoins/hermaios1.jpg)



Greek Kharoshthi coin of Strato I. [https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce\\_199\\_100/indogreekcoins/strato1coin.jpg](https://franpritchett.com/00routesdata/bce_199_100/indogreekcoins/strato1coin.jpg)



Vasudeva Krishna and Balarama with Chakra and plough on the coin of Agathocles. <https://preview.redd.it/earliest-unambiguous-images-of-lord-vasudev-krishna-and-v0-aek2mcfy2ti91.jpg?auto=webp&s=e952ea226cc3c161c742bb51caaf0d3687ea46b6>

### 2.3: Roman Coins

Large number of Roman imperial coins found in India certainly indicates commercial relations between Roman Empire and India. The coins of one period could have been exported to India in a subsequent

period due to economic and monetary situations in the empire. There is no doubt that the coins were imported as bullion, and accepted according to their intrinsic worth. They could actually have been used for payments but their value was also determined by the worth of their metal. These pieces of precious metals were also hoarded. The coins are found in various parts of India, like Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamilnadu. In comparison with other parts of India Roman coins were mostly found in Southern India especially in Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh. The import of the Roman specie to India took place in two forms: "Gold for external commerce and Silver for small change, and the Romans money was deliberately exported to India to create a Roman currency there and fill the vacuum caused by the dearth of a commercial coinage" (F. H. Warmington 275) this proposition has not met with general acceptance. But the discovery of a large numbers of "Roman coins in the peninsular region" (Paula J. Turner 6-7) certainly calls for an explanation.

The issue of gold and silver coins exported to India was carefully selected. They were the issues with high gold and silver content, usually when there had been a major reform that had reduced the metal content of new issues while the older, superior coins were being withdrawn from circulation. These coinages provided a good source of Silver, Gold a later copper on favorable terms for the export trade. It is pertinent to note in this context that the obverse of Roman gold in most cases, especially in Andhra Pradesh and sometimes of silver coins as well bears a variety of incision marks across the imperial face. The inclusion of Gujrat, Western Maharashtra and Western Malwa, which formed the Kshatrapa dominions, into the Kushana Empire even though it is generally taken for granted by most historians; and as regards the "flow of Roman Gold coins in the upper and lower Deccan, there could be absolutely no question of the Kushanas planning any role in the regulation of currency" (Paula J. Turner 29-34).

"In fact Roman gold coins served an important economic function by filling the vacuum caused by the absence of any local Gold currency. But this was not in the case of North India" (Ajay Mitra Shastri, IIRNS, 46-47). The range of Roman coins found classified by Emperors; that trade begun under Augustus (31B.C-14A.D), reached a peak under Nero (54-64A.D), declined until the time of Caracalla (198-217A.D) and then almost ceased; but reviewed slightly in the 5th century. P.L.Gupta recognized that "Republican Denarii came to India only in the Imperial and saw that most of the hoards containing Denarii of Augustus were deposited in the time of Tiberius or a

little later” (P. L. Gupta 122-37), but still concludes that Roman contacts with India began in the time of Augustus and continued into the time of Nero and most likely its tempo lasted only for about three quarters of a Century.

Roman Silver Denarii of the Republic struck in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1st Century BCE were still current in very substantial numbers in hoards from Pompeii at the time of its destruction by the eruption of Vesuvius on 24th August 79 CE “the study of hoards of Roman Silver Denarii in hoards ending with the Flavians (70- 96 CE) and 22.9% of the Denarii in hoards ending with Trajan (98-117CE)” (Sture Bolin 335-57).

### **Roman Silver Coin: Denarii**

“The composition of hoards of Roman silver Denarii found in India however is very different from that hoards of Roman silver Denarii found inside the Empire” (David W. MacDowall 62-74). The Denarii that they contain have been very carefully selected. Chosen for export were issues of Denarii which contained high quality Silver, especially those that could be easily recognized as such by the use of distinctive reverse types. During the Roman Republic the Denarii had been the standard coin denomination struck in good Silver 95-97% pure. The relatively rare Roman Republican Denarii from India usually occur in hoards with a terminal date in the early 2nd Century CE, the period when they were disappearing from Denarii hoards found inside the Empire. The Indian finds contain any of the Denarii issues in the 1st two phases of Augustus between 31BCE and 15CE, that had been struck to a mere variable standard of Silver purity, or struck after CE 54 or 55- the year when Nero first reduced the Silver purity and weight of the Denarii, ten years before his more drastic and celebrated debasement in 64 CE.

### **Roman Gold Coin: Aurei**

Roman gold Aurei was regularly issued from the time of Roman Emperor Augustus and the Roman monetary system became bi-metallic, based on both a gold and

silver. The gold Aurei replaced the silver Denarii as the standard denomination after the major currency reform of Nero in 64 CE. The silver Denarii retained its fixed market relation to the gold Aurei (25 silver Denarii still being worth of 1 gold Aurei), but its silver content was progressively debased by the addition of increasing amounts of copper. In spite of its silver content, it effectively became a more token denomination,



overvalued in relation to the metal it contained. “Until the middle of the 3rd century the Roman gold Aurei was struck in very fine gold with purity above 99% (A. Burnett 105-21). In hoards and single finds from India there are substantial numbers of gold Aurei issued by the first Emperor Augustus and his successor Tiberius.



Silver denarius of Tiberius (14–37 CE) found in India.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/78/Silver\\_denarius\\_of\\_Tiberius\\_14CE\\_37CE\\_found\\_in\\_India\\_Indian\\_copy\\_of\\_a\\_the\\_same\\_1st\\_century\\_CE\\_Coin\\_of\\_Kushan\\_king\\_Kujula\\_Kadphises\\_copying\\_a\\_coin\\_of\\_Augustus.jpg/880px-thumbnail.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/78/Silver_denarius_of_Tiberius_14CE_37CE_found_in_India_Indian_copy_of_a_the_same_1st_century_CE_Coin_of_Kushan_king_Kujula_Kadphises_copying_a_coin_of_Augustus.jpg/880px-thumbnail.jpg)

The gold Aurei was not selected by purity of metal, as the silver Denarii, but by the weight of gold. There was a growing number of gold Aurei struck in the middle of the 2nd century CE in Indian hoards. Unlike 2nd century hoards found inside the Empire, the Indian finds do not include Aurei of Emperors from the reforms of Nero and succeeding Emperors in the 1st century CE. They usually consist of Aurei in excellent condition of two or three Emperors only in the 2nd century CE, with occasional but not many die links. They have clearly not come straight from the mint, but they have again been selected as having a good weight of gold. There is no 3rd century CE gold Aurei in Indian hoards. At this period gold became very scarce in the empire. Later, 2nd century gold Aurei provided the prototypes for the series of imitation gold coins manufactured in India sometimes in bizarre obverse and reverse combinations which reflects the high esteem in which Roman gold coins had come to hold in the sub-continent. (Roman\_Coins\_in\_India\_and\_their\_impact.pdf)

### **Roman Coins in South India**

Large quantities of Roman coins reached South India through trade. Roman coins are found in the hoards of Pennar, Chavadipalyam, Mambalam, Navalai in Tamilnadu. In Mamabalam a hoard containing 770

coins in a pot is unearthed. This hoard has silver denarius of Augustus. In Kerala, a hoard containing 117 coins (12 gold, 105 silver) is unearthed in a place called Tallapalli Taluk of Trissur district. Two hoards are reported from the Telugu states, one is from Nusthullapur (Karimnagar District) and Weepagandla (Mahboobnagar District). The Nusthullapur hoard was studied by Parameswari Lal Gupta and published in the Museum series of Andhra Pradesh.



Roman gold coins excavated in Pudukottai, Tamil Nadu, India. One coin of Caligula (37–41 CE), and two coins of Nero (54–68).

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/58/Roman\\_gold\\_coins\\_excavated\\_in\\_Pudukottai\\_India\\_on\\_e\\_coin\\_of\\_Caligula\\_31\\_41\\_and\\_two\\_coins\\_of\\_Nero\\_54\\_68.jpg/880px-Roman\\_gold\\_coins\\_excavated\\_in\\_Pudukottai\\_India\\_one\\_coin\\_of\\_Caligula\\_31\\_41\\_and\\_two\\_coins\\_of\\_Nero\\_54\\_68.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/58/Roman_gold_coins_excavated_in_Pudukottai_India_on_e_coin_of_Caligula_31_41_and_two_coins_of_Nero_54_68.jpg/880px-Roman_gold_coins_excavated_in_Pudukottai_India_one_coin_of_Caligula_31_41_and_two_coins_of_Nero_54_68.jpg)



Gold coins of Augustus, Cladius, Justinian I found in the hoards of South India. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a1/AugustusCoinPudukottaiHoardIndia.jpg/440px-AugustusCoinPudukottaiHoardIndia.jpg>; [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c5/Gold\\_coin\\_of\\_Claudius\\_50\\_51CE\\_excavated\\_in\\_South\\_India.jpg/236px-Gold\\_coin\\_of\\_Claudius\\_50\\_51CE\\_excavated\\_in\\_South\\_India.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c5/Gold_coin_of_Claudius_50_51CE_excavated_in_South_India.jpg/236px-Gold_coin_of_Claudius_50_51CE_excavated_in_South_India.jpg); [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a8/Gold\\_coin\\_of\\_Justinian\\_I\\_527CE\\_565CE\\_excavated\\_in\\_India\\_probably\\_in\\_the\\_south.jpg/238px-Gold\\_coin\\_of\\_Justinian\\_I\\_527CE\\_565CE\\_excavated\\_in\\_India\\_probably\\_in\\_the\\_south.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a8/Gold_coin_of_Justinian_I_527CE_565CE_excavated_in_India_probably_in_the_south.jpg/238px-Gold_coin_of_Justinian_I_527CE_565CE_excavated_in_India_probably_in_the_south.jpg)

## 2.4: Coinage of the Kushanas

The Yueh – Chi tribe settled in Bactria and ruled for a century in the Oxus region. A prince of the Kue – Shang (Kushana) branch invaded Indo – Parthian realm and occupied Central Afghanistan. His successors ruled in the regions of Gandhara and the lower Swat valley. They occupied the land up to Varanasi in the east and extended beyond the Indian frontiers in the west. They built the glorious Kushana empire which lasted for about hundred years. A copper coin with a diademed bust bearing the names Heroas, Hykrodes and Phseigacharis. The portrait had a moustache, heavy jaw and locks falling over his ears. Out of all the copper coins found in the Bactrian region, only the coins of Heroas have the word *Kushanos*. Thus, it is considered that Heraos was a predecessor of the first Kushana king Kujala Kadphises.

### Coins of Kujala Kadphises

Kujala Kadphises issued coins in copper. They bear the bust of the last Bactrian ruler Hermaeus on the obverse and Herakles in the reverse. The Kushanas initially imitated the Parthian coins after Hermaeus. The Roman imitation can be seen from his coins having a diademed Roman male head on the obverse which can be identified as Augustus. The reverse of the coin has the figure of Kujala Kadphises dressed in Indo – Scythian costume. The third type coins of Kujala bear bull and camel on both the sides reflecting the nomadic nature of the Kushanas. All these coins are bi lingual having the inscription in Greek in the obverse and Kharoshthi on the reverse.



Tetrahttps://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/62/Coin\_of\_the\_Kushan\_king\_Kujula\_Kadphises.jpg/440px-Coin\_of\_the\_Kushan\_king\_Kujula\_Kadphises.jpg

Tetradrachm of Kujula Kadphises (30-80 CE) in the style of Hermaeus.

**Obv:** Hermaios-style diademed bust. Corrupted Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΤΗΡΟΣΣΥ ΕΡΜΑΙΟΥ (“Basileos Sterossy Hermaiou”): “King Hermaeus, the Saviour”.

**Rev:** Herakles standing with club and lion skin. Kharoṣṭhī legend: KUJULA KASASA KUSHANA YAVUGASA DHARMATHIDASA “Kujula Kadphises ruler of the Kushans, steadfast in the Law (“Dharma”).

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula\_Kadphises)



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|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/af/Kujula_Kadphises._Laureate_Julio-Claudian_style.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/af/Kujula_Kadphises._Laureate_Julio-Claudian_style.jpg</a></p>   | <p><b>Coin of Kujula Kadphises. Circa AD 30/50-80. Obv</b> Laureate Julio-Claudian style head right. Greek legend around: ΚΟΖΟΛΑ ΚΑΔΑΦΕC ΧΟΡΑΝΟV ΖΑΟΟV. <b>Rev</b> Kujula Kadphises seated right, raising hand; tripartite symbol to left. Legend <i>Khushanasa Yauasa Kuyula Kaphasa SachaDhramatidasa</i>.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula_Kadphises">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula_Kadphises</a></p> |
|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/6a/Kujula_Kadphises_Tetradrachm.jpg/400px-Kujula_Kadphises_Tetradrachm.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/6a/Kujula_Kadphises_Tetradrachm.jpg/400px-Kujula_Kadphises_Tetradrachm.jpg</a></p>                      | <p><b>Kujula Kadphises Tetradrachm.</b></p> <p><b>Obv</b> Brahma bull standing right, with Triratana above. Blundered Greek legend.</p> <p><b>Rev</b> Camel standing right. Kharoshthi legend <i>Maharayasa Rayatirayasa Kuyula Kara Kapasa</i>.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula_Kadphises">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula_Kadphises</a></p>   |
|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a6/Kujula_seated_cross_legged_facing.jpg/400px-Kujula_seated_cross_legged_facing.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a6/Kujula_seated_cross_legged_facing.jpg/400px-Kujula_seated_cross_legged_facing.jpg</a></p> | <p><b>Coin of Kujula Kadphises.</b></p> <p><b>Obv</b> Kujula seated cross legged facing, Kharoshti legend: <i>Kuyula Kadaphasa Kushanasa</i>.</p> <p><b>Rev</b> Zeus on the reverse, Greek legend: ΚΟΖΟΛΑ ΧΟΡΑΝΟY ΖΑΟΟY.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula_Kadphises">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula_Kadphises</a></p>   |

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|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/65/Kujula_Kadphises_Helmeted.jpg/393px-Kujula_Kadphises_Helmeted.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/65/Kujula_Kadphises_Helmeted.jpg/393px-Kujula_Kadphises_Helmeted.jpg</a></p> | <p><b>Kujula Kadphises coin.</b></p> <p><b>Obv</b> Helmeted soldier head right.</p> <p><b>Rev</b> Warrior standing right, holding shield and spear.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula_Kadphises">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kujula_Kadphises</a></p> |
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### Coins of Wima Kadphises

Wima Kadphises, the successor of Kujala issued different coins from his father with an accomplished image. He continued the tradition of issuing copper coins but was responsible for the extensive use of Gold coins in India. It is suggested that the Roman gold coins which were pouring into India by this time gave him the idea of using gold coins in India for the first time. He issued gold coins in three denominations –

- Double dinara,
- Dinara and
- Quarter dinara (rare)

Wima is portrayed as an elderly man on the obverse of his coins in various postures. He is seen in the following positions in his coins;

- as sitting on the couch,
- seated cross legged,
- seated at a window
- riding an elephant
- driving in a biga
- standing sacrificing at an altar (only in copper).

The coins issued by Wima such as floating through the clouds with a flame from his shoulders indicated that he claimed divinity for himself. Another significant feature of his coins is that on the reverse of his coins Siva is seen with his long trident and his bull. Some of his coins have Siva with trident – battle – axe. It is very interesting to note that he identified himself with Saivism and adapted the Indian environment. Wima Kadphises

was the last ruler who issued bi lingual coins in Greek and Kharoshthi inscriptions. Some of the copper coins of this time bear a bust facing right and a horseman holding a whip, similar to the coins of Azes.



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/73/Double\\_stater\\_Vima\\_Kadphises\\_Guimet\\_MG24356\\_%28cropped%29.jpg/440px-Double\\_stater\\_Vima\\_Kadphises\\_Guimet\\_MG24356\\_%28cropped%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/73/Double_stater_Vima_Kadphises_Guimet_MG24356_%28cropped%29.jpg/440px-Double_stater_Vima_Kadphises_Guimet_MG24356_%28cropped%29.jpg)

#### Double stater Vima Kadphises.

**Obverse:** diademed and crowned figure of Vima Kadphises seated facing on stool with ornate legs, head left, feet on footstool, holding laurel branch in raised right hand. Corrupted Greek language legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΟΟΗΜΟ ΚΑΔΦΙΧΗC (“Basileus Ooimo Kadphisis”): “King Vima Kadphises”. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vima\\_Kadphises](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vima_Kadphises)







[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/02/Vima\\_Kadphises\\_with\\_ithyphallic\\_Shiva.jpg/800px-Vima\\_Kadphises\\_with\\_ithyphallic\\_Shiva.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/02/Vima_Kadphises_with_ithyphallic_Shiva.jpg/800px-Vima_Kadphises_with_ithyphallic_Shiva.jpg)

#### Vima Kadphises with ithyphallic Shiva.

**Obv:** Bust of king emerging from a cloud, with a crested helmet and holding a club. Corrupted Greek language legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΟΟΗΜΟ ΚΑΔΦΙΣΗC (“Basileus Ooimo Kadphisis”): “King Vima Kadphises”. **Rev:** Shiva, with a long trident in right hand, and the skin of a tiger in the left. Left, monogram of Vima Kadphises. Right: Buddhist triratna symbol (or possibly Nandipada). Kharoshthi legend: MAHARAJASA RAJADIRAJASA SARVALOGAISVARASAMAHSIVARASA VIMA KATHPHISASA TRADARA “The Great king, the king of kings, lord of the World, the Mahisvara (lord of the earth), Vima Kathphisa, the defender.”

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vima\\_Kadphises](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vima_Kadphises)



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|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/64/WimaKadphisesCoin.jpg/368px-WimaKadphisesCoin.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/64/WimaKadphisesCoin.jpg/368px-WimaKadphisesCoin.jpg</a></p> | <p><b>Vima Kadphises in long coat.</b> Legend in corrupted Greek script: BACIAEYC BACIAEWN CWTHP MEΓAC OOHMO KAΔΦICHC ("Basileus Basileuon Soter Megas Ooemo Kadphises"): "King of Kings Vima Kadphises the Great Saviour". <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vima_Kadphises">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vima_Kadphises</a></p>   |
|    | <p>Bronze coin of Wima Kadphises with camel, found in Khotan. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/dc/Bronze_coin_of_Wima_Kadphises_found_in_Khotan.jpg/239px-Bronze_coin_of_Wima_Kadphises_found_in_Khotan.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/dc/Bronze_coin_of_Wima_Kadphises_found_in_Khotan.jpg/239px-Bronze_coin_of_Wima_Kadphises_found_in_Khotan.jpg</a></p> |
|   | <p>Bronze coin of Wima Kadphises with camel, found in Khotan. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/dc/Bronze_coin_of_Wima_Kadphises_found_in_Khotan.jpg/239px-Bronze_coin_of_Wima_Kadphises_found_in_Khotan.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/dc/Bronze_coin_of_Wima_Kadphises_found_in_Khotan.jpg/239px-Bronze_coin_of_Wima_Kadphises_found_in_Khotan.jpg</a></p> |
|  <p>Coin of Wima on a chariot. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/5/50/Plate_XX-Vima.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/5/50/Plate_XX-Vima.jpg</a></p>  |  <p>Wima seated on a throne holding a thunder bolt. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/3/3d/Vima31.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/3/3d/Vima31.jpg</a></p>   |



Coin of Wima offering at an altar.  
Imperial title in Greek: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ  
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΣΩΤΗΡ ΜΕΓΑΣ ΟΟΗΜΟ  
ΚΑΔΦΙΣΗΣ

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/3/35/Vima36.jpg>; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vima\\_Kadphises](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vima_Kadphises)



Coin of Wima holding a club. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/4/43/Vima33.jpg>

### Coins of Kanishka

Kanishka, the next known Kushana ruler was identified as the son of Huvishka I from the copper coin found at Sonkh in Mathura. This coin is very indigenous bearing a Brahmi inscription *Huvishkasya putra kanikasya*. Kanishka was mentioned in Buddhist texts as Kanika and his Sonkh coin can be identified as the earliest from the Yamuna – Ganga region. The gold coins of Kanishka have the following figures;

- king riding an elephant
- seated cross legged on a rock or a cloud
- both the above type coins have *Oeshko* which is different from the script on his fathers' coins *Oeshki*.

Kanishka issued copper and gold coins both having a same portrait; - standing, dressed in a long tunic, shalwar, mantle held by double clasp at the chest and a low round cap, sacrificing at an altar with a spear in the left hand. Kanishka did not issue any coin with deity on the reverse. His coins bore the Greek names for the deities such as Helios, Salene and Hephaistos. He introduced Iranian and Indian names on the other side of the coins instead of the Greek names. The title *Shaonano Shao Kaneshki Koshano* is common his coins. Kanishka issued gold coins in two denominations; *dinara* and *quarter dinara*. Both these coins have same script and images on the obverse and reverse varying in their size.

Following the transition to the Bactrian language on coins, Iranian and Indic divinities replace the Greek ones:

- ΑΡΔΟΧΨΟ (*ardoxsho*, Ashi Vanghuhi)
- ΛΡΟΟΑΣΠΟ (*lrooaspo*, Drvaspa)
- ΑΘΨΟ (*adsho*, Atar)
- ΦΑΡΡΟ (*pharro*, personified khwarenah)
- ΜΑΟ (*mao*, Mah)
- ΜΙΘΡΟ, ΜΙΙΡΟ, ΜΙΟΡΟ, ΜΙΥΡΟ (*mithro*, *miiro*, *mioro*, *miuro*, variants of Mithra)
- ΜΟΖΔΟΟΑΝΟ (*mozdaooano*, "Mazda the victorious?")
- ΝΑΝΑ, ΝΑΝΑΙΑ, ΝΑΝΑΨΑΟ (variants of pan-Asiatic *Nana*, Sogdian *nni*, in a Zoroastrian context Aredvi Sura Anahita)
- ΜΑΝΑΟΒΑΓΟ (*manaobago*, Vohu Manah)
- ΟΑΔΟ (*oado*, Vata)
- ΟΡΑΛΑΓΝΟ (*orlagno*, Verethragna)

Only a few Buddhist divinities were used as well:



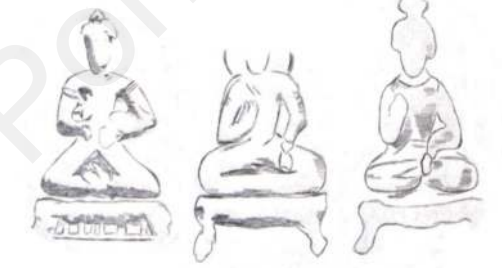
- ΒΟΔΔΟ (*boddo*, Buddha),
- ΨΑΚΑΜΑΝΟ ΒΟΔΔΟ (*shakamano boddho*, Shakyamuni Buddha)
- ΜΕΤΡΑΓΟ ΒΟΔΔΟ (*metrago boddo*, the bodhisattava Maitreya)

Only a few Hindu divinities were used as well: ΟΗΨΟ (*oesho*, Shiva). A recent study indicates that *oesho* may be Avestan Vayu conflated with Shiva. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kushan\\_coinage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kushan_coinage))



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8a/Kanishka\\_I\\_Greek\\_legend\\_and\\_Helios.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8a/Kanishka_I_Greek_legend_and_Helios.jpg)

**Gold coin of Kanishka I with Greek legend and Hellenistic divinity Helios. (c. 120 AD).** **Obverse:** Kanishka standing, clad in heavy Kushan coat and long boots, flames emanating from shoulders, holding a standard in his left hand, and making a sacrifice over an altar. Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΚΑΝΗΨΚΟΥ "[coin] of Kanishka, king of kings". **Reverse:** Standing Helios in Hellenistic style, forming a benediction gesture with the right hand. Legend in Greek script: ΗΛΙΟΣ *Helios*. Kanishka monogram (*tamgha*) to the left. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanishka>)

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|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/48/Coin_of_Kanishka_I.jpg/600px-Coin_of_Kanishka_I.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/48/Coin_of_Kanishka_I.jpg/600px-Coin_of_Kanishka_I.jpg</a></p>                           | <p>Gold coin of <b>Kanishka I</b> with a representation of the Buddha (c. 120 AD).</p> <p><b>Obv:</b> Kanishka standing.., clad in heavy Kushan coat and long boots, flames emanating from shoulders, holding standard in his left hand, and making a sacrifice over an altar. Kushan-language legend in Greek script (with the addition of the Kushan Ð “sh” letter): <b>ÐAONANOÐPAO KANHÐKI KOÐANO</b> (“Shaonanoshaos Kanishki Koshano”): “King of Kings, Kanishka the Kushan”.</p> <p><b>Rev:</b> Standing Buddha in Hellenistic style, forming the gesture of “no fear” (abhaya mudra) with his right hand, and holding a pleat of his robe in his left hand. Legend in Greek script: <b>BOÐÐO</b> “Boddo”, for the Buddha. Kanishka monogram (tamgha) to the right.</p> <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanishka">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanishka</a></p> |
|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/92/Kanishka_I_with_Maitreya.jpg/440px-Kanishka_I_with_Maitreya.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/92/Kanishka_I_with_Maitreya.jpg/440px-Kanishka_I_with_Maitreya.jpg</a></p> | <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/92/Kanishka_I_with_Maitreya.jpg/440px-Kanishka_I_with_Maitreya.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/92/Kanishka_I_with_Maitreya.jpg/440px-Kanishka_I_with_Maitreya.jpg</a></p>   |
|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/18/KushanMaitreyaTotal.jpg/400px-KushanMaitreyaTotal.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/18/KushanMaitreyaTotal.jpg/400px-KushanMaitreyaTotal.jpg</a></p>                     | <p>Depictions of “Maitreya” (with legend <b>METPAFO BOÐÐO</b> “Metrage Boddo”) in Kanishka’s coinage. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/18/KushanMaitreyaTotal.jpg/400px-KushanMaitreyaTotal.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/18/KushanMaitreyaTotal.jpg/400px-KushanMaitreyaTotal.jpg</a></p>  |

### Coins of Huvishka

Huvishka, the successor of Kanishka portrayed himself in bust sized pictures in his coins facing left and rarely to the right. His coins bear his portrait wearing garments decked with jewels and a headgear. He is seen

- holding a club in the right hand and in the left in some other coins.
- Holding *ankusa* on some coins (early coins)



- Spear resting on his shoulders (later coins)
- With an inscription *Shaonano Shao Oeshki Koshano*.
- Reclining on a couch
- Seated frontally
- Seated on a cushion holding a club
- New Iranian deities like *Ahura Mazda* (Zoroastrian deity); *Ashaeixsho* (Asavahista, embodiment of truth); *Oanindo* (Vanainti – deity associated with Vrithiagna); *Oaxsho* (River god Oxus); *Rishno* (personification of righteousness); and *Shaoreora* (the genius imperial might) are introduced by him.
- New non – Iranina deities such as; *Herakles*, *Serapis*, *Oros* are seen on his coins.
- Siva is shown with his consort Uma (Ommo). Besides Siva and Omma his son Kartikeya is found on his gold coins. He is known as *Maasena* (Mahasena).
- Kartikeya is shown in three different names and depictions such as; *Skandakumara*, *Mahasena* and *Visakha* each having a separate entity.



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/da/HuvishkaBMCoin.jpg/440px- HuvishkaBMCoin.jpg




Coin of Huvishka. Legend in Kushan language and Greek script (with the Kushan letter ꞑ “sh”): ꞑAONANOꞑAO OOHꞑKI KOꞑANO (“Shaonanoshao Ooishki Koshano”): “King of kings, Huvishka the Kushan”. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huvishka>



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/95/Huvishka\\_with\\_seated\\_god\\_Serapis\\_%28%22Sarapo%22%29.jpg/440px-Huvishka\\_with\\_seated\\_god\\_Serapis\\_%28%22Sarapo%22%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/95/Huvishka_with_seated_god_Serapis_%28%22Sarapo%22%29.jpg/440px-Huvishka_with_seated_god_Serapis_%28%22Sarapo%22%29.jpg)

Huvishka with seated Roman-Egyptian god Serapis (ΣΑΡΑΠΙΟ, “*Sarapo*”) wearing the modius.



|   |   |
|---|---|
|  <p>Coin of Huvishka holding a scepter.<br/> <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/12/">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/<br/>commons/thumb/1/12/</a></p>  |  <p>Coin of Huvishka.<br/> <i>Obverse:</i> ΠΑΟΝΑΝΟΨΑΟ ΟΟΗΨΚΙ<br/>         ΚΟΨΑΝΟ<br/>         (<i>Shaonanoshaos Ooishki Koshano</i>, “King of kings, Huvishka the Kushan”).<br/> <i>Reverse:</i> Herakles with legend ΗΡΑΚΛΙΑΟ<br/>         (Erakilo).<br/> <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huvishka">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huvishka</a></p> |
| <p>Huvishka_with_god_Serapis_%28%22Sarapo%22%29.jpg/400px- Huvishka_with_god_Serapis_%28%22Sarapo%22%29.jpg</p>   |   |
|  <p>Coin of Kushan ruler Huvishka diademed, with deity Pharros (“ΦΑΡΡΟΣ”). Circa CE 152–192.<br/> <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huvishka">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huvishka</a></p>   |  <p>Coin of Huvishka with deity Ardoksho.<br/> <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/56/Kushan_king_Huvishka_coin.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/<br/>commons/5/56/Kushan<br/>_king_Huvishka_coin.jpg</a></p>   |
|  <p>Huvishka with Ahura Mazda. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1e/Huvihska_with_Ahuramazda.jpg/400px-Huvihska_with_Ahuramazda.jpg">https://<br/>upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/<br/>commons/thumb/1/1e/ Huvihska_with_<br/>Ahuramazda.jpg/400px- Huvihska_with_<br/>Ahuramazda.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Huvishka with Asha Vahista. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f5/Huvishka_with_Ashaexsho.jpg">https://<br/>upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/<br/>commons/f/f5/Huvishk a_with_<br/>Ashaexsho.jpg</a></p>   |

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|  <p>Huvishka with Shaoreoro. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/31/Huvishka_and_Shaoreoro.jpg/400px-Huvishka_and_Shaoreoro.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/31/Huvishka_and_Shaoreoro.jpg/400px-Huvishka_and_Shaoreoro.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Huvishka in the obverse and Siva with his consort Umma on the reverse. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c0/Huvishka_with_Ommo_and_Oesho.jpg/400px-Huvishka_with_Ommo_and_Oesho.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c0/Huvishka_with_Ommo_and_Oesho.jpg/400px-Huvishka_with_Ommo_and_Oesho.jpg</a></p> |
|  <p>Huvishka with Maasena. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/ac/Huvishka_Maaseno.jpg/400px-Huvishka_Maaseno.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/ac/Huvishka_Maaseno.jpg/400px-Huvishka_Maaseno.jpg</a></p>                           |  <p>Huvishka with Skanda Kumara and Visakha. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e7/Huvishka_with_Skando-Komaro_and_Bizago.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e7/Huvishka_with_Skando-Komaro_and_Bizago.jpg</a></p>   |

### Coins of Vasudeva I

Vāsudeva I was a Kushan emperor, last of the “Great Kushans.” Named inscriptions dating from year 64 to 98 of Kanishka’s era suggest his reign extended from at least 191 to 232 CE. He ruled in Northern India and Central Asia, where he minted coins in the city of Balkh (Bactria). He probably had to deal with the rise of the Sasanians and the first incursions of the Kushano-Sasanians in the northwest of his territory. The coinage of Vasudeva consisted in gold dinars and quarter dinars, as well as copper coins. Vasudeva almost entirely removed the pantheon of deities displayed in the coinage of Kanishka and Huvishka. At the end of his rule, Vasudeva introduced the nandipada symbol (𑖀) on his coinage. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasudeva\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasudeva_I))

Like his ancestors he was also shown on his coins as;

- Standing in profile
- Sacrificing at an altar
- Holding a trident in left hand instead of spear in case of his ancestors

- He reduced the number deities on the reverse side and confined to Oesho (Siva), Nana and Vasudeva.
- His coins are well struck and neatly engraved.



Gold coin of Vasudeva I.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/bb/VASUDEVA\\_I.jpg/540px-VASUDEVA\\_I.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/bb/VASUDEVA_I.jpg/540px-VASUDEVA_I.jpg)

**Obv:** Vasudeva in tall helmet, holding a scepter, and making an offering over an altar. Legend in Kushan language and Greek script (with the Kushan letter 𑀧 “sh”): 𑀧AONANO𑀧AO BAZOΔHO KO𑀧ANO (“Shaananoshao Bazodeo Koshano”): “King of kings, Vasudeva the Kushan”.

**Rev:** OHṬO (*oesho*), Hindu god Shiva, holding a trisula scepter, with the bull Nandi. Monogram (*tamgha*) to the left. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasudeva I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vasudeva_I))

## Coins of Kanishka II

Vasudeva I was succeeded by Kanishka II. His coins have the inscription starting at 10 o'clock and contains a single brahmi letter. The king's name is shown as *kaneshko*.



Coin of Kanishka II with Oesho. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1d/Coin\\_of\\_KanishkaII.jpg/400px-Coin\\_of\\_KanishkaII.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1d/Coin_of_KanishkaII.jpg/400px-Coin_of_KanishkaII.jpg)



Kanishka II with Ardoksho.  
<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/91/KanishkaIIWithArdoksho.JPG/385px-KanishkaIIWithArdoksho.JPG>



### Coins of Vasishka, Kanishka III and Vasudeva II

Vasishka, whose coins came to light recently is said to have succeeded Kanishka II. They are similar to the coins of his ancestor in fabric and execution. Though the coins have the inscriptions at 1 o' clock like in the coins of Kanishka II, he replaced Oesho with Ardoksho. She is seen seated on a high throne holding a cornucopie in the left hand with a pasa in the right. Vasishka was followed by his son Kanishka III. The decline of the Kushana empire was gradual after the rule of Kanishka III. The Sassanids occupied the territories that are west to the Indus during the reign of Ardashir I while the eastern territories remained intact for a while. Several tribes such as the Nipunada, Gadahara, Gadakhara, Payasa and Shaka have occupied the western parts of the Kushana territories. As a result the Kushana empire confined to the areas in and around Yamuna extended towards the present day Rajasthan - Haryana.



Coin of Vasishka with Ardoksho. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/bc/Vasishka.jpg/540px-Vasishka.jpg>

**Obverse:** [PAONANO PAO BAZH] PKO K[O]PA[NO] (Shaonanoshaio Bazishko Koshano) in Greco-Bactrian script, Vasishka, nimbate, diademed, and crowned, standing facing, head left, sacrificing over an altar to left, and holding trident in left hand; filleted trident to left; "Vira" in Brahmi script Brahmi script in inner right field.

**Reverse:** ΔXOO in Greco-Bactrian script, nimbate and diademed Ardoxsho seated facing on throne, feet holding filleted investiture garland in right hand and cradling a cornucopia in left arm; above, tamgha to left.



Gold coin of Vasishka as Vaskushana with Oesho. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/52/Gold\\_Dinar\\_of\\_Vasishka\\_%28as\\_Vaskushana%29\\_Circa\\_CE\\_240-250.jpg/600px-Gold\\_Dinar\\_of\\_Vasishka\\_%28as\\_Vaskushana%29\\_Circa\\_CE\\_240-250.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/52/Gold_Dinar_of_Vasishka_%28as_Vaskushana%29_Circa_CE_240-250.jpg/600px-Gold_Dinar_of_Vasishka_%28as_Vaskushana%29_Circa_CE_240-250.jpg)



Coin of Kanishka III. **Obverse:** King Kanishka standing holding a standard, sacrificing over an altar; trident to left. Greco-Bactrian legend around:  $\text{PAONANO}\text{PAO KANH}\text{P}\text{KI KO}\text{PANO}$  Shaonanoshaos Kanishki Koshano "King of Kings, Kanishka the Kushan".  $\Omega$  ga in Brahmi to right of altar; gho in Brahmi between legs;  $\text{H}$  hu in Brahmi to right of scepter.

**Reverse:** Ithyphallic Oesho ( $\text{O}\eta\text{Po}$ ), thought to be Shiva, standing facing, holding a garland or diadem and trident; behind, the bull Nandi standing left; to upper left, pellet above tamgha






Coin of Shaka.  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a0/Kushan\\_Empire\\_Shaka\\_Circa\\_AD\\_325-345.jpg/540px-Kushan\\_Empire\\_Shaka\\_Circa\\_AD\\_325-345.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a0/Kushan_Empire_Shaka_Circa_AD_325-345.jpg/540px-Kushan_Empire_Shaka_Circa_AD_325-345.jpg)

**Obverse:** King Shakā making a sacrifice over an altar. To the right of the altar:  $\text{A}$  Vi. The name of the ruler appears vertically to the right of the king in Gupta script:  $\text{H}\text{H}$  Sha-kā. Under the arm of the ruler, also in Brahmi script:  $\text{Si-ta}$ . Traces of Greco-Bactrian legend around.

**Reverse:** Ardoxsho enthroned, holding filleted investiture garland and cornucopia; tamgha to upper left. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaka\\_\(Kushan\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaka_(Kushan))



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|  <p>Vasudeva II coin. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8e/Coin_Vasudeva_II_Guimet_MA24360_%28cropped%29.jpg/440px-Coin_Vasudeva_II_Guimet_MA24360_%28cropped%29.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8e/Coin_Vasudeva_II_Guimet_MA24360_%28cropped%29.jpg/440px-Coin_Vasudeva_II_Guimet_MA24360_%28cropped%29.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Coin of Vasudeva II. The name of the ruler appears vertically next to his left arm in Gupta script: <b>𑂔𑂰𑂶𑂔</b> <i>Vā-su</i>. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/07/Coin_of_VasudevaII.jpg/240px-Coin_of_VasudevaII.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/07/Coin_of_VasudevaII.jpg/240px-Coin_of_VasudevaII.jpg</a></p> |
|  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ec/Mahi_Kushan_4th_century_CE.jpg/540px-Mahi_Kushan_4th_century_CE.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ec/Mahi_Kushan_4th_century_CE.jpg/540px-Mahi_Kushan_4th_century_CE.jpg</a></p>  | <p><b>Coinage of Mahi, c. 300–305 CE.</b></p> <p><b>Obverse:</b> King standing facing, head left, holding trident and banner, altar before. His name <b>𑀕𑀸𑀭𑀺</b> <i>Ma-hi</i> in the Brahmi script appears vertically to the right. Legend around in Greco-Bactrian script.</p> <p><b>Reverse:</b> Ardoxsho enthroned, holding filleted investiture garland and cornucopia; tamgha to upper left.</p>   |

## 2.5: Sakas and Kshatrapa coins

Indo-Scythians (also called Indo-Sakas) were a group of nomadic Iranian peoples of Scythian origin who migrated from Central Asia southward into the northwestern Indian subcontinent, precisely into the modern-day South Asian regions of Afghanistan, Pakistan and northern India. The migrations persisted from the middle of the 2nd century BCE to the 4th century CE.

The first Saka king of India was Maues/Moga (1st century BCE) who established Saka power in Gandhara, Indus Valley, and other regions in today's Afghanistan, Pakistan and North India. The Indo-Scythians extended their supremacy over north-western subcontinent, conquering the Indo-Greeks and other local kingdoms. The Indo-Scythians were apparently subjugated by the Kushan Empire, by either Kujula Kadphises or Kanishka. Yet the Saka continued to govern as satrapies, forming the Northern Satraps and Western



Satrap. The power of the Saka rulers started to decline in the 2nd century CE after the Indo-Scythians were defeated by the Satavahana emperor Gautamiputra Satakarni. Indo-Scythian rule in the northwestern subcontinent ceased when the last Western Satrap Rudrasimha III was defeated by the Gupta emperor Chandragupta II in 395 CE.

The invasion of northern regions of the Indian subcontinent by Scythian tribes from Central Asia, often referred to as the Indo-Scythian invasion, played a significant part in the history of the subcontinent as well as of nearby regions. In fact, the Indo-Scythian war is just one chapter in the events triggered by the nomadic flight of Central Asians from conflict with tribes such as the Xiongnu in the 2nd century CE, which had lasting effects on Bactria, Kabul, and the Indian subcontinent as well as far-off Rome in the west, and more nearby to the west in Parthia. Ancient Roman historians, including Arrian and Claudius Ptolemy, have mentioned that the ancient Sakas ("Sakai") were nomadic people. The first rulers of the Indo-Scythian Kingdom were Maues, c. 85–60 BCE, and Vonones, c. 75–65 BCE. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Scythians>)

### Coins of Maues



Two main lines of Saka are known from their coins. Maues in Punjab and Vonones in Kandahar and Baluchistan have minted their coins in silver and copper similar to the coins of Indo-Bactrian king Apollodotus. Interestingly, Maues did not put his bust or head on his coins. The coins of Maues show nomadic features. King with a spear on horseback is the commonly seen portrait in the Saka coins. The coins of Maues show;

- A man seated cross-legged is shown on the reverse.
- Striding male figure with a club and trident (identified as Siva)
- Most of the coins are made of copper
- Most common of all is the elephant head in the obverse and Caduceus on the reverse.
- The coins bear only Greek legend *Basileos Mayou* on the reverse like Bactrian coins.
- Maues coins are bilingual. They sometimes have grand titles such as *Basileos Basileon Magalou Mayou* and its Prakrit equivalent *Maharajasa Moasa* and *Rajadirajas Mahatasa Moasa* in Kharoshti.

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| <p>Coin of Maues.<br/> <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/39/Maues_on_horse_detail.jpg/440px-Maues_on_horse_detail.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/39/Maues_on_horse_detail.jpg/440px-Maues_on_horse_detail.jpg</a></p> | <p>Balarama depicted on the coin of Maues. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/cf/BalaramaMauesCoin1stCenturyBCE.jpg/440px-BalaramaMauesCoin1stCenturyBCE.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/cf/BalaramaMauesCoin1stCenturyBCE.jpg/440px-BalaramaMauesCoin1stCenturyBCE.jpg</a></p> | <p>Silver tetradrachm of Maues. The obverse shows <u>Zeus</u> standing with a sceptre. The Greek legend reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΜΑΥΟΥ (Of the Great King of Kings Maues). The reverse shows <u>Nike</u> standing, holding a wreath. <u>Kharoshthi</u> legend. <u>Taxila</u> mint. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/fe/Coin_of_Maues.jpg/660px-Coin_of_Maues.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/fe/Coin_of_Maues.jpg/660px-Coin_of_Maues.jpg</a>; <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maues">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maues</a></p> |

### Coins of Venones

Venones was a contemporary of Maues who held sway in Kandahar (Arachosia). His coins in silver bear a king with a spear on the obverse seated on horseback and Zeus standing with a long sceptre and thunderbolt on the reverse. His copper coins have Heracles crowing himself. Palas Athene is shown standing next in left to him with shield and spear in the reverse. All his coins have the Greek legend *Basileos Baeleon Megalou Ononou* and its equivalent Prakrit legend *Maharajabhrata dhramikasa Spalahorasa* or *Spalahoraputrasa dharmikasa Spalagadamasa*. These titles suggest that Venones was not an independent ruler. Venones was succeeded by Spalyris and ruled along with Spalagadama and later ruled independently and issued coins on his own name. His coins have horse rider on the obverse and Zeus on the reverse. In some coins Spalyris is seen along with Azes I and the legends on the coins suggest that they both enjoyed equal status.

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|  <p>Coin of Vonones. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/99/Vonones_with_Spalahores.jpg/600px-Vonones_with_Spalahores.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/99/Vonones_with_Spalahores.jpg/600px-Vonones_with_Spalahores.jpg</a></p> | <p>Silver tetradrachm minted under Vonones, with the legend of his name and his commander Spalahores. Obverse with Greek legend: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΤΑΛΟΥ ΟΝΩΝΟΥ, "Of the King of Kings the Great Vonones". (<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vonones_of_Sakastan">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vonones_of_Sakastan</a>)</p>  |
|  <p>Coin of Spalyris. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/2e/Vonones_Indo-Scythian.jpg/440px-Vonones_Indo-Scythian.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/2e/Vonones_Indo-Scythian.jpg/440px-Vonones_Indo-Scythian.jpg</a></p>        |  <p>Coin of Spalagadamas. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/79/Vonones_with_Spalagadames.jpg/440px-Vonones_with_Spalagadames.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/79/Vonones_with_Spalagadames.jpg/440px-Vonones_with_Spalagadames.jpg</a></p> |

### Coins of Azes I

Azes I issued *tetradrachm* and *drachm* in silver. He issued round and square copper coins also in his name. His copper and silver coins have horseback with spear on the obverse and Zues, Nike, Pallas holding a palm and lamp on the reverse of silver coins and a humped bull. His coins resembled the coins of Maues. He issued coins with a portrait of king riding on two – humped Bactrian camel, holding an *ankusa* which reflects his nomadic life. Azes I was succeeded by Azilises.



Azes I in military dress. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/bd/Coin\\_of\\_Azes\\_I.jpg/440px-Coin\\_of\\_Azes\\_I.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/bd/Coin_of_Azes_I.jpg/440px-Coin_of_Azes_I.jpg)



## Coins of Azilises and Azes II

Azilises introduced coins similar to his two ancestors Maues and Venenos. He is the first to introduce *abhisheka Lakshmi*. The picture of *Lakshmi* is shown standing on lotus flower with twin stalks and leaves and on each leaf stands an elephant sprinkling water on her head. He was followed by Azes II. He issued coins in a different characterisation. In his coins, the king is holding a whip instead of the spear as in the case of Azes I. His coins are debased and crude.



Coin of Azilises. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/11/Coin\\_of\\_Azilises.jpg/440px-Coin\\_of\\_Azilises.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/11/Coin_of_Azilises.jpg/440px-Coin_of_Azilises.jpg)



Coin of Azes II in silver. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/07/AzesIIFineCoin.jpg/500px-AzesIIFineCoin.jpg>



Coin of Azes II with triratna symbol. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1f/AzesIITriratna.jpg/240px-AzesIITriratna.jpg>



Coin of Azes II in seating position. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5a/Coin\\_of\\_the\\_Indian\\_Scythian\\_king\\_Azes\\_I.jpg/234px-Coin\\_of\\_the\\_Indian\\_Scythian\\_king\\_Azes\\_I.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5a/Coin_of_the_Indian_Scythian_king_Azes_I.jpg/234px-Coin_of_the_Indian_Scythian_king_Azes_I.jpg)



Portrait of Azes II. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/51/AzesIICoinage.jpg/240px-AzesIICoinage.jpg>



### Coins of Gondophares I

**Gondophares I** was the founder of the Indo-Parthian Kingdom and its most prominent king, ruling from 19 to 46. He probably belonged to a line of local princes who had governed the Parthian province of Drangiana since its disruption by the Indo- Scythians in c. 129 BC, and may have been a member of the House of Suren. During his reign, his kingdom became independent from Parthian authority and was transformed into an empire, which encompassed Drangiana, Arachosia, and Gandhara. He is generally known from the Acts of Thomas, the Takht-i-Bahi inscription, and silver and copper coins bearing his visage. He was succeeded in Drangiana and Arachosia by Orthagnes, and in Gandhara by his nephew Abdagases I(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gondophares>). He issued coins only in copper. The obverse of his coins

- bears a king sitting on a horse
- a portrait in bust
- an enthroned king
- Nike, Pallas, Zeus are common deities on the reverse side of his coins
- He issued coins in association with the rulers of the west such as Aspavarma, Sasa, Sapadana and Satavastra.

Gondophares I was succeeded by Abdagases, Orthagnes, Pacores, Gondophares II, Arcaces and Sanabares. The Saka Pahlava supremacy in India ended with the advent of Kushanas in the first century CE.



Coin of Gondophares I. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/22/Gondophares.jpg/440px-Gondophares.jpg>

Coin of Abdagases minted in Gandhara. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/ac/Abdagases\\_I.jpg/440px-Abdagases\\_I.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/ac/Abdagases_I.jpg/440px-Abdagases_I.jpg)



### Coins of the Kshatrapas

A **satrap** was a governor of the provinces of the ancient Median and Achaemenid Empires and in several of their successors, such as in the Sasanian Empire and the Hellenistic empires. A **satrapy** is the territory governed by a satrap. A satrap served as a viceroy to the king, though with considerable autonomy. The word came to suggest tyranny or ostentatious splendour, and its modern usage is a pejorative and refers to any subordinate or local ruler, usually with unfavourable connotations of corruption. The Satraps of Medo – Persians, Seleucid, Parthian and Sassanian, and Indian Satraps (Northern and Western Kshatrapas) ruled various territories of the Achaemenid empire.



Satrapies of the Achaemenid empire. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b2/Map\\_of\\_Achaemenid\\_Imperial\\_Satrapies\\_%28English\\_Version%29.png/700px-Map\\_of\\_Achaemenid\\_Imperial\\_Satrapies\\_%28English\\_Version%29.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b2/Map_of_Achaemenid_Imperial_Satrapies_%28English_Version%29.png/700px-Map_of_Achaemenid_Imperial_Satrapies_%28English_Version%29.png)



Territories of the northern Kshatrapas.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/0a/Map\\_of\\_the\\_Northern\\_Satraps\\_%28Northern\\_Sakas%29.jpg/580px-Map\\_of\\_the\\_Northern\\_Satraps\\_%28Northern\\_Sakas%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/0a/Map_of_the_Northern_Satraps_%28Northern_Sakas%29.jpg/580px-Map_of_the_Northern_Satraps_%28Northern_Sakas%29.jpg)



Territory of the western Kshatrapas.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/aa/Map\\_of\\_the\\_Western\\_Satraps.png/580px-Map\\_of\\_the\\_Western\\_Satraps.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/aa/Map_of_the_Western_Satraps.png/580px-Map_of_the_Western_Satraps.png)

### Coinage of northern Kshatrapas



Following are the coins issued by the northern Kshatrapa rulers Rajuvula, Sodasa and Bhadayasa. The coinage of the period, such as that of Rajuvula, tends to become very crude and barbarized in style. It is also very much debased, the silver content becoming lower and lower, in exchange for a higher proportion of bronze, an alloying technique suggesting less than wealthy finances.



Coin of Rajuvula, the Northern Kshatrapa. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/2e/Rajuvula\\_coin\\_with\\_Greek\\_legend.jpg/700px-Rajuvula\\_coin\\_with\\_Greek\\_legend.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/2e/Rajuvula_coin_with_Greek_legend.jpg/700px-Rajuvula_coin_with_Greek_legend.jpg)

**Obv.** Bust of king and Greek legend *BASILEOS BASILEON SOTEROS RAZU*, “Saviour King of Kings, Rajuvula”.

**Rev.** Athena Alkidemos and Kharoshthi legend *Chatrapasa apratihatachakrasa rajuvulasa* “the Satrap Rajuvula whose discus (*cakra*) is irresistible”. These coins are found near Sankassa along the Ganges and in Eastern Punjab. Possibly minted in Sagala.<sup>[3]</sup> The coins are derived from the Indo-Greek types of Strato II. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rajuvula>)

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|  <p>Coin of Rajuvula with lion in the obverse and Herakles with lion skin in the reverse with the legend <i>mahakshatrapa</i>.<br/> <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8a/Rajuvula_Northern_Satrap_with_lion_and_Herakles_holding_lion_skin.jpg/400px-Rajuvula_Northern_Satrap_with_lion_and_Herakles_holding_lion_skin.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8a/Rajuvula_Northern_Satrap_with_lion_and_Herakles_holding_lion_skin.jpg/400px-Rajuvula_Northern_Satrap_with_lion_and_Herakles_holding_lion_skin.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Copper diadem of Rajuvula. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8d/Coin_of_Rajuvula.jpg/391px-Coin_of_Rajuvula.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/8d/Coin_of_Rajuvula.jpg/391px-Coin_of_Rajuvula.jpg</a></p> |
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### Coins of Sodasa

Sodasa's coins have been found in Mathura only, suggesting that he only ruled over the Mathura region. They do not follow traditional Indo-Scythian coinage patterns, but rather the designs of local rulers of Mathura, and are only made of lead and copper alloy. The legends only use the Indian Brahmi script, whether Saodasa's father Rajuvula had used coins derived from the Indo-Greeks, with legends in Greek and Kharoshthi. This suggests that Sodasa had significantly integrated into the local Indian culture. Sodasa's coins usually show on the obverse a standing female and tree-like symbol, with the legend "*Mahakatapasa putasa Khatapasa Sodasa*", i.e., "Satrap Sodasa, son of the Great Satrap". On the reverse appears a Lakshmi with elephants pouring water over her.

Three types of legends are known, with one coin type of Sodasa bearing the legend "son of Rajuvula":

- "Satrap Sodasa, son of the Great Satrap" (*Mahakhatapasa putasa khatapasa sodasasa* followed by a svastika)
- "Satrap Sodasa, son of Rajuvula" (Svastika followed by *Rajuvula putasa khatapasa sodasasa*)
- "Great Satrap Sodasa" (*Mahakhatapasa sodasasa*) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sodasa>)





**Bhadayasa** was a minor Indo-Scythian ruler in the areas of Eastern Punjab and Mathura in India, during the 1st century CE. He is considered one of the Northern Satraps. He is mainly known through his coins, which are direct imitations of those of the Indo-Greek king Zoilos II, or the hypothetical Zoilos III. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhadayasa>)



Coin of Bhadayasa.  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1e/Bhadrayasha\\_coin.jpg/600px-Bhadrayasha\\_coin.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/1e/Bhadrayasha_coin.jpg/600px-Bhadrayasha_coin.jpg)

### Coinage of western Kshatrapas


**Western Kshatrapas** were Indo-Scythian (Saka) rulers of the western and central parts of India (extending from Saurashtra in the south and Malwa in the east, covering modern-day Sindh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh states), between 35 and 415 CE. The Western Satraps were contemporaneous with the Kushans who ruled the northern part of the Indian subcontinent, and were possibly vassals of the Kushans. They were also contemporaneous with the Satavahana (Andhra) who ruled in Central India. They are called “Western Satraps” in modern historiography in order to differentiate them from the “Northern Satraps”, who ruled in Punjab and Mathura until the 2nd century CE.



The power of the Western Satraps started to decline in the 2nd century CE after the Saka rulers were defeated by the Emperor Gautamiputra Satakarni of the Satavahana dynasty. After this, the Saka kingdom revived, but was ultimately destroyed by Chandragupta II of the Gupta Empire in the 4th century CE. The Western Satraps, having been defeated by the Abhiras/Ahirs, declined rapidly during the second half of the third century. Altogether, there were 27 independent Western Satrap rulers during a period of about 350 years. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western\\_Satraps](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Satraps))

### Coins of western Kshatrapas

The earliest Kshaharata for whom there is evidence is Abhiraka, whose rare coins are known. He was succeeded by Bhumaka, father of Nahapana, who only used on his coins the title of Satrap, and not that of *Raja* or *Raño* (king). Nahapana's rule is variously dated to 24-70 CE, 66-71 CE, or 119-124 CE, according to one of his coins, which bear Buddhist symbols, such as the eight-spoked wheel (dharmachakra), or the lion seated on a capital, a representation of a pillar of Ashoka. Nahapana succeeded him, and became a very powerful ruler. He occupied portions of the Satavahana Empire in western and central India. Nahapana held sway over Malwa, Southern Gujarat, and Northern Konkan, from Bharuch to Sopara and the Nasik and Poona districts.<sup>[18]</sup> At that time, the area northwest of the Western Satraps in Baluchistan was ruled by the Paratarajas, an Indo-Parthian polity, while the Kushans were expanding their empire in the North. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western\\_Satraps](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Satraps))

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|    | <p><b>Obv:</b> Arrow, pellet, and thunderbolt. Kharoshthi inscription <i>Chaharasa da Chatrapasa Bhumakasa</i>: "Ksaharata Satrap Bhumaka".</p> <p><b>Rev:</b> Capital of a pillar with seated lion with upraised paw, and wheel (dharmachakra). Brahmi inscription: <i>Kshahara tasa Kshatrapasa Bhumakasa</i>. (<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Satrap_s">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Satrap_s</a>)</p> |
| <p>Coin of Bhumaka. <a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4b/Coin_of_Bhumaka.jpg/500px-Coin_of_Bhumaka.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4b/Coin_of_Bhumaka.jpg/500px-Coin_of_Bhumaka.jpg</a></p> |  |



Coin of Nahapana. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c9/Silver\\_coin\\_of\\_Nahapana\\_British\\_Museum.jpg/440px-Silver\\_coin\\_of\\_Nahapana\\_British\\_Museum.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c9/Silver_coin_of_Nahapana_British_Museum.jpg/440px-Silver_coin_of_Nahapana_British_Museum.jpg)



Coins of Nahapana struck by Gautamiputra Satakarni. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5c/Gautamiputra\\_Yajna\\_Satakarni\\_over\\_Nahapana.jpg/500px-Gautamiputra\\_Yajna\\_Satakarni\\_over\\_Nahapana.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5c/Gautamiputra_Yajna_Satakarni_over_Nahapana.jpg/500px-Gautamiputra_Yajna_Satakarni_over_Nahapana.jpg)



Nahapana coin hoard. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/85/Nahapana\\_coin\\_hoard.jpg/660px-Nahapana\\_coin\\_hoard.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/85/Nahapana_coin_hoard.jpg/660px-Nahapana_coin_hoard.jpg)

### **Key Points**

The punch marked coins are the early coins made of silver which were in circulation in ancient India before the Christian era. The numismatists have identified several hundreds of symbols such as hills, trees, birds, animals, human figures etc. the coins issued in different republic states differ in variety. Stamping the symbols on the coins also was an interesting aspect in ancient Indian coins. If there is only one symbol, it is placed in the centre of the coin; two symbols are placed side by side of the coin. When there are four symbols, they are stamped in two pairs. The coins of each republic state differ from each other in execution, weight, quality and the weight. The material with which the coins are made is also different from one region to the other.

The true association of foreign coinage starts with the death of Alexander, the Great. His victory over the Indian territories was commemorated by *decadrachms* and *tetradrachms* in Babylonia. It is interesting to note that the region of Gandhara is ruled by different rulers and twenty three rulers are known from the Indo – Bactrian coins in India. Gold coins were issued during the Indo – Bactrian period but were confined to Bactria. Some legendless coins of Menander are found in India which may be the earliest gold coins in the Indian soil. Large number of Roman imperial coins found in India certainly indicates commercial relations between Roman Empire and India. The coins are found in various parts of India, like Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamilnadu.

The Kushans occupied the land up to Varanasi in the east and extended beyond the Indian frontiers in the west. They built the glorious Kushana empire which lasted for about hundred years. A copper coin with a diademed bust bearing the names Heroas, Hykrodes and Phseigacharis. The portrait had a moustache, heavy jaw and locks falling over his ears. Out of all the copper coins found in the Bactrian region, only the coins of Heroas have the word *Kushanos*. The Kushana rulers such as Kujala Kadphises, Wima Kadphises, Kanishka I, Huvishka, Vasudeva, Kanishka II issued coins in copper, silver and Gold.

Two main lines of Saka are known from their coins. Maues in Punjab and Vonones in Kandahar and Baluchistan have minted their coins in silver and copper similar to the coins of Indo – Bactrian king Apollodotus. Interestingly, Maues did not put his bust or head on his coins. The coins of Maues show nomadic features. King with a spear on horseback is the commonly seen portrait in the Saka coins. The Satraps of Medo – Persians, Seleucid, Parthian and Sassanian, and Indian Satraps (Northern and Western Kshatras) ruled various territories of the Achaemenid empire.

#### *Do you know?*

The Numismatic Society of India is India's oldest institution dedicated to research on coins and related currency items. The society aims to encourage the study of and promote research in the rich field of Indian Numismatics. As stated in its Rules, the society is intended to be the coordinating body that will promote the knowledge and regulate the study of Indian Numismatics. The Society publishes a variety of publications on the various subjects of numismatic including The Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, one of the most reputed journals of the discipline published annually. The Society holds annual conferences in different cities of the country where it is invited to hold these conferences by university departments or local numismatic societies. The Society also holds Seminars on different topics at the time of the conference every year.

#### **Aims and Objects of Numismatic Society of India:**

1. To promote and guide the study of India coins, seals, medals, paper currency, etc. and those of the adjacent countries having historical relations with India and allied subjects and to offer expert help in their study.
2. To publish a Journal of Journals and to serve as a forum for the study of numismatics.
3. To publish notes, monographs, memoirs, and other work on numismatics.

4. To co-operate with coin – collectors, numismatists, numismatic societies and museums in India and in other countries by offering them information, advice and help about India coin and currencies and their collections, and to establish and exchange academic relations with them.
5. To organize periodical seminars and conferences for the scientific exchange of views on numismatic and allied problems.
6. To organise exhibitions of coins, medals, seals, paper currencies, etc.
7. To create public interest in numismatics by organizing popular lectures, film shows publications, etc.
8. To encourage the collection and preservation of coins, seals, medals, etc, to arrange explorations.
9. To organise a museum of coins medals, seals, paper currency, etc. provide necessary facilities for their study and to build up the society into a center for advanced research in numismatics.
10. To maintain a central library of books and journals to promote numismatic studies.
11. To institute and award prizes and medals for researches, discoveries and publications.
12. To co-operate with the Government and mints in the matters pertaining to monetary issues.
13. To co-operate with the Treasure Trove Committees of the States in India in identifying and classifying coins.
14. To encourage the establishment of branches of the society at various places, and to grant affiliation to societies of similar nature.
15. To associate other numismatic bodies for the furtherance of numismatic studies.
16. To encourage the establishment of numismatic museums.
17. To collect, hold, invest and disburse funds and properties for the purpose of promoting the above aims and objects
18. To perform all other acts that may be conducive to the above objects.



### **Contribution by the members of the Society and the Publications of the Society**

In the earlier years, the Society seems to have taken a very keen interest in the preparation of the lists or catalogues of collections lying in various museums and with the private collectors. The original members took upon themselves to prepare the catalogues in their own province and constantly pressed on the Provincial governments in other parts of India to have this work done at an early date. They even undertook to train candidates for the purpose. With their influence and competence they succeeded in obtaining a good response and encouragement in this direction.

In 1912 for instance, Whitehead was relieved of some of his official duties by the Punjab Government with a view to allow him leisure enough for the preparation of the catalogue of coins in the Central Museum, Lahore, and was further permitted to proceed on furlough to England to see the catalogue through the press. This resulted in the publication of two valuable volumes of the *Catalogue of Coins in the Lahore Museum* in 1914 which remain the standard publication in branches of Indian numismatics to which they relate. In the same year the *Catalogue of Gupta Coins in the British Museum* was published by one of our members, J. Allan, whereby our knowledge of these coins was materially advanced, particularly regarding the metrical character of the legend. H.E. Stapleton's *Catalogue of the Provincial Cabinet of Eastern Bengal & Assam Coins* was published in 1911. I.J. Michael Published his *List of Coins in the Mac Mohan Museum, Quetta in 1912*.

Then the issue of the catalogue of Mughal coins in the Lucknow Museum by C.J. Brown and that of the Sultans of Delhi by Prayag Dayal in the year 1920 and 1925 respectively brought many new coins to light. Bleazby like his earlier lists of coins in the museums at Srinagar and Rangoon, Undertook to prepare a catalogue of the coins in the Nagpur Museum and issued it in the year 1922. A *Catalogue of coins of Indian States* compiled by Henderson, C.J. Brown and Valentine was edited by J.Allan and issued in 1928.

*Catalogue of the Provincial Coin Cabinet in Assam* was published by A.W. Botham in 1930. *The Catalogue of Durrani Coins in the Lahore Museum* by Whitehead issued in 1933 proved the necessity and advantage of dynastic catalogues of coins in a comprehensive style. The authorities of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, also followed suit and the *Catalogue of Coins of the Gujarat Sultans* compiled by C.R. Singhal and edited by G.V. Acharya was brought out. This and the *Catalogue of the Coins and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi* in the Museum of Archaeology at Delhi by H.N. Wright include even the coins that are in other cabinets and as such can be termed as a corpii on the respective subjects. This welcome phase of cataloguing facilitated study to a very great extent and the students were spared the trouble of turning over the pages of various publications for a single subjects.

Thus almost all the important museums in India through their various experts contributed their own quota by issuing the catalogue of their treasures for the use and reference of scholars working in different branches of Numismatics. G.H. Khare prepared a *Catalogue of Coins in the Bharat Itihasa samsodhaka Mandal, Poona* in 1933. In 1936, Allan published another important volume of the *Catalogue of Indian Coins in the British Museum, London*, dealing with ancient Indian punch-marked coins and local and tribal series. N.K. Bhattashali's *Catalogue of Coins of the Dacca Museum* was published in the 1936 and Samsuddin Ahmad's *Supplement to Vol. II of Catalogue of coins in the India Museum, Calcutta* was out in 1939.

Apart from the catalogues and lists, the members have also published from time to time useful monograph and books dealing with the general aspects of coinage in India as well as on specified coins series of an area or of a period. W.H. Valentine's *Modern Copper Coins of the Mohammadan States* was published in 1911 and the *Copper coins of India (Bengal and United Provinces) Pt. I and Pt. II (Royal and contiguous Native States)* in 1914. R.P. Jackson published his *Coin-collecting in Mysore* in 1909 and the *Dominion, Emblems and Coins of the South Indian Dynasties* in 1913. Henderson's work *The Coins of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan of Mysore* was published in 1921. In the same year Bhandarkar published his *Lectures on Ancient Indian Numismatics*. In 1922, Whitehead's

*The Pre-Muhammadan Coinage of North-Western India* was published, and his *The Coins of the Dutch East India* in 1931. In 1931, S.K. Chakraborty's work *A Study of Ancient Indian Numismatics* was published and in 1938 his monograph *Currency Problems of Ancient India*. T. Desikachari published his *South Indian Coins* in 1933 and along with T. Rangachariar he published later in 1946 *Dravidian Coins-the Pandyas and Cholas and Their Coinage*. <https://thenumismatics.org/fifty-years-of-numismatic-society-of-india/>

### Chapter Check-up

1. Discuss about the Punch marked coins in India.
2. Write a note on the Greek and Roman coinage.
3. Write about the coinage in the Kushana period.

### Short Answers

1. Coins of Azes I and Azes II
2. Coins of Rajuvula.
3. Abhisheka Lakshmi coins
4. Coins of Maues and Venones.

### Glossary

ΑΡΔΟΧΣΟ (*ardoxsho*, Ashi Vanghuhi) ΛΡΟΟΑΣΠΟ (*lrooaspo*, Drvaspa) ΑΘΡΟ (*adsho*, Atar)

ΦΑΡΡΟ (*pharro*, personified khwarenah)

ΜΑΟ (*mao*, Mah)

ΜΙΘΡΟ, ΜΙΙΡΟ, ΜΙΟΡΟ, ΜΙΥΡΟ (*mithro*, *miiro*, *mioro*, *miuro*, variants of Mithra)

ΜΟΖΔΟΟΑΝΟ (*mozdaooano*, "Mazda the victorious?")

ΝΑΝΑ, ΝΑΝΑΙΑ, ΝΑΝΑΒΑΟ (variants of pan-Asiatic *Nana*, Sogdian *nny*, in a Zoroastrian context *Aredvi Sura Anahita*)

ΜΑΝΑΟΒΑΓΟ (*manaobago*, Vohu Manah)

ΟΑΔΟ (*oado*, Vata)

ΟΡΑΛΑΓΝΟ (*orlagno*, Verethragna)

Only a few Buddhist divinities were used as well:

ΒΟΔΔΟ (*boddo*, Buddha),

**𑖀𑖦𑖫𑖤𑖱𑖪𑖨𑖴𑖭𑖳𑖰** (*shakamano boddho*, Shakyamuni Buddha)

**ΜΕΤΡΑΓΟ ΒΟΔΔΟ** (*metrago boddo*, the bodhisattava Maitreya)

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DDE, Pondicherry University



## UNIT - III

### Coins of Satavahanas

#### Structure

##### Learning Objectives

- 3.1 Coins of Satavahanas
- 3.2 Sangam Age Coins
  - 3.2.1 Coins of Cheras,
  - 3.2.2 Coins of Cholas,
  - 3.2.3 Coins of Pandyas
- 3.3 Gupta Coinage.

##### Key Points

##### Do you know?

##### Chapter

##### Check-up Glossary

#### Learning Objectives

*After going through this unit you should be able to*

- Know and understand the historical importance of the Satavahana Coinage.
- Understand the influence and introduction of new coins in South India.
- Discuss about the Sangam Age coins.
- Explain why the Gupta period is considered as Golden period for the Coinage in India.

#### 3.1: Coins of Satavahanas

The **Satavahanas** also referred to as the **Andhras** in the Puranas, were an ancient Indian dynasty based in the Deccan region. Most modern scholars believe that the Satavahana rule began in the late second century BCE and lasted until the early third century CE, although some assign the beginning of their rule to as early as the 3rd century BCE based on the Puranas, but uncorroborated by archaeological evidence. The Satavahana

kingdom mainly comprised the present-day Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Maharashtra. At different times, their rule extended to parts of modern Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Karnataka. The dynasty had different capital cities at different times, including Pratishthana (Paithan) and Amaravati (Dharanikota).

The origin of the dynasty is uncertain, but according to the Puranas, their first king overthrew the Kanva dynasty. In the post-Maurya era, the Satavahanas established peace in the Deccan region and resisted the onslaught of foreign invaders. In particular their struggles with the Saka (Western Satraps) went on for a long time. The dynasty reached its zenith under the rule of Gautamiputra Satakarni and his successor Vasisthiputra Pulamavi. The kingdom had fragmented into smaller states by the early 3rd century CE.

The Satavahanas were early issuers of Indian state coinage struck with images of their rulers. They formed a cultural bridge and played a vital role in trade and the transfer of ideas and culture to and from the Indo-Gangetic Plain to the southern tip of India. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satavahana\\_dynasty#History](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satavahana_dynasty#History))



Extent of the Satavahana empire. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/be/Map\\_of\\_the\\_Satavahanas.png/560px- Map\\_of\\_the\\_Satavahanas.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/be/Map_of_the_Satavahanas.png/560px-Map_of_the_Satavahanas.png)

Thirty rulers of this family have ruled for 460 years. The Satavahanas ruled sometime till sometime in the third century CE.

A study of the symbols on the Satavahana coins represents several objects of the physical world such as Sun, Moon, mountains, rivers, animals and trees. The following are the symbols that are seen on the Satavahana coins.

1. Animal motifs: Bull, elephant, horse and lion are shown frequently on the Satavahana coins.
  - Elephant figure is seen on Punch marked coins and cast copper coins of Eran and Taxila.
  - Bull is very common on the Satavahana coinage.
  - Lion and horse are shown on the local coins.
2. Solar symbols: The solar symbol occurs on the Satavahana coinage as an important aspect of Brahmanism. The Nanaghat inscription starts with the salutation to Surya. The solar symbols represent
  - Source of energy
  - Fertility
  - Rain.
3. Moon: Moon is another universal deity depicted on the coinage. On the Satavahana coins moon appears along with the Chaitya and Ujjain symbols. The Moon and Sun motifs are associated to both the Indian and Iranian traditions.
4. Chaitya: Common feature on the Satavahana coins associated with the moon symbol in the Satavahana coinage. Theobald suggests that the Chaitya symbol represents a stupa. Spooner describes it as a mountain.
5. Ujjain Symbol: The Ujjain symbol comprises four small balls attached to four bars. It sometimes has a crescent above the rings. This symbol is a significant feature of the Satavahana coinage. This symbol is named by A. Cunningham for their common occurrence with the local Ujjain coins which indicate the connection of the Satavahanas and the western Kshatrapas.
6. Tree Symbol: It is the most ancient and prominent symbol of the indigenous coinage. The tree symbol is often seen in the railings of the period. The Satavahana tree has three or four branches with leaves. This symbol also represents the sacred bodhi tree of the Buddhists.

7. Svastika: This symbol is found on the early coins of Mauryan, Sunaga and Kushana territories. This symbol implies peace, prosperity and happiness.
8. Nandipada: The Nandipada symbol on the Satavahana coins can be associated to a bull indicating its Saivite character.
9. Triratna: the triratna symbol is a Buddhist symbol that stands for Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Jainas also adopted this symbol.
10. Taurine: This symbol is similar with the zodiac sign Taurus. This symbol is seen on some Mauryan coins.
11. Srivatsa: Bloch describes this symbol as an ornamental trisula. This symbol is seen in the Buddhist, Jaina and Vaishnava coins on the breast it is one of the *mahapurushalakshanas*.
12. Conch shell: This religious symbol is seen as the attribution to Vishnu.
13. Lotus: Lotus in the Indian tradition is also associated with lord Vishnu and Lakshmi. According to Buddhism, it is represented as a seat of Buddha.
14. Triangle headed standard: it is described as the sacrificial post or a yupa.
15. River with fishes: in Indian tradition, rivers are often considered and worshipped as deities. A river with fishes is a common symbol on the Satavahana coins.
16. Naga: A wavy line on the Satavahana coins is suggested to represent the rivers but few scholars ascribe them to the serpent. The Naga cult was well known in ancient India as it is depicted as the bed of Vishnu and adorns the neck of Siva. It is also seen in the sculptures at Bharhut, Sanchi, Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda.
17. Chakra: A wheel with twelve spokes occurs on the coins of Vasisthiputra Pulumavi. Potin coins of Satakarni have a eight spoked wheel or chakra. This coin is rectangular in shape. This symbol is an attribution of Vaishnava cult in India. To a Buddhist eye it may be seen as a *dharmachakra* and to the Jainas it may be seen as the time cycle.
18. Ship: The coins of Pulumavi and Yajnasri Satakarni have the ship symbol. These symbols are found from the Coromandal coast. These coins represent the maritime activities of the Satavahanas. This symbol attests the maritime trade relations and the extension of the territories up to the Coromandal coast.

19. Bow and Arrow: The Bow and arrow symbols on the Satavahana coinage comes from the Kolhapur region. In the Saivite tradition, the bow and arrow can be attributed to Siva as kirata or Skanda – Kartikeya. In other case, the bow and arrow may indicate the character of the issuer.
20. Human figures: The representation of a human figure, holding a staff in the left hand and a pot in the right hand in the copper coins of Ujjain and the Satavahana coins. Coins from the Vidisa region have a female figurine. Two lead coins bearing a legened *siri Satakanisa* on the obverse and Gaja lakshmi on the reverse.

The symbols and figures on the Satavahana coins throw light on the socio religious ideas during the period. one can trace the Buddhist, Tantric and Brahmanical views with their coinage. The combination of the symbols and the figures attributing to different areas are given below.

|    | Combination of Symbols                            | Attribution                                       |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | Bull & tree in the railing                        | Aparantha in Western Deccan                       |
| 2  | Elephant & tree in railing                        | Aparantha in Western Deccan                       |
| 3  | Elephant, tree and Ujjain symbol                  | Aparantha in Western Deccan                       |
| 4  | Elephant & Chaitya                                | Aparantha in Western Deccan                       |
| 5  | Elephant & Ujjain symbol                          | Central Deccan; Andhradesa; Vidarbha; Maharashtra |
| 6  | Chaitya & Ujjain symbol                           | Aparantha in western Deccan                       |
| 7  | Elephant & Traingle headed standard               | Aparantha in the western Deccan                   |
| 8  | Elephant, Tree and triangle headed standard       | Aparantha in Western Deccan                       |
| 9  | Elephant, Tree, Bull and triangle headed standard | Aparantha in Western Deccan                       |
| 10 | Elephant, tree and chaitya                        | Aparantha in Western Deccan                       |
| 11 | Lion and Ujjain symbol                            | Saurashtra, Aparantha, Eastern Deccan             |
| 12 | Lion, tree and Ujjain symbol                      | Saurashtra, Aparantha                             |



|    |  |                                 |
|----|--|---------------------------------|
| 13 | Lion, chaitya  | Andhradesa                      |
| 14 | Triangle headed standard, Ujjain symbol, elephant and river with fishes, blank | Central India                   |
| 15 | Ujjain symbol, triangle headed standard, Chaitya                               | Central India                   |
| 16 | Standing man   | Central India                   |
| 17 | Chaitya, Ujjain symbol, tree in railing, blank                                 | Central India                   |
| 18 | Triratna, svastika, nandipada or taurine, tree, river and fishes               | Central India                   |
| 19 | Triangle headed standard, Ujjain symbol and elephant                           | Central India                   |
| 20 | Horse, chaitya and tree in railing   | Andhradesa                      |
| 21 | Horse, Ujjain symbol   | Andhradesa                      |
| 22 | Ship, Ujjain symbol  | Andhradesa and Coromandal coast |
| 23 | Bust, Chaitya and Ujjain symbol (on silver coins)                              | Whole of Satavahana empire.     |

The Andhra coins were found scattered over Maharashtra, Gujarat, Vidarbha, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Coromandal coast of Tamil Nadu. The copper punch marked coins have the name Sri Sata and Sri Satakarni. They have occupied larger territories in western India and Deccan and the coins have a human figure in the obverse and four different symbols on the reverse. The other rulers like Sri Pulumavi, Siva Sri Pulumavi, Skanda Satakarni, Sri Yajna Satakarni, Vijaya Satakarni and Pulumavi issued coins with elephant, tree in railing, and Ujjain symbols. The Satavahana rule was bifurcated into two branches after the 27<sup>th</sup> king- Sri Yajna Satakarni one ruling Maharashtra and Rudra Satakarni in the Deccan and Andhradesa as the successor of Sri Yajna Satakarni.

In the Deccan, lead coins of the Satavahana rulers are known. The Hyderabad coins of Sri Sati and Sri Satakarni are also minted in lead. They bear a three arched hill on the obverse and the Ujjain symbol on the reverse.

The Maharashtra and the Deccan coins that are issued in lead have another striking feature; they bear the metonymics. These coins show six arched hill, a horse, a lion, a ship or wheel as one of the main characteristics on the obverse. The Kotilingala coins of Karimnagar district bear the names of Sri Satavahana, Sri Satakarni, and Rajno Siri Chchimukha Satavahana. However, the coins of Sri Satavahana are the earliest. The copper coins issued by Sri Satavahana and Si Satakarni came to light in the recent times. They are found from Junnar near Pune. The motifs on the Junnar coins are completely different from the Kotilingala coins. The junnar coins have a maned lion standing facing left before a pillar with several storeys. A three arched hill can be seen between the legs of the lion.

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   |   | <p><b>The Junnar coin made of potin.</b></p> <p>Obv.: With a maned lion facing left towards a pillar.</p> <p>Rev: Ujjain symbol.</p> <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/junnar_city/5ec329879afdb2.38983788-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/junnar_city/5ec329879afdb2.38983788-160.jpg</a></p> <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/junnar_city/5ec32987bbe666.01854281-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/junnar_city/5ec32987bbe666.01854281-160.jpg</a></p> |
|  |  | <p><b>Sri Satakarni coin from the Kotilingala hoard.</b></p> <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/kotilingala_city/5ec1bd76832d10.41834241-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/kotilingala_city/5ec1bd76832d10.41834241-160.jpg</a></p> <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/kotilingala_city/5ec1bd76a07a03.84203992-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/kotilingala_city/5ec1bd76a07a03.84203992-160.jpg</a></p>   |









Besides lead and potin coins, at least seven Satavahana rulers – Vasisthiputra Pulumavi, Vasisthiputra Satakarni, Vasisthiputra Siva Sri Pulumavi, Gautamiputra Satakarni, Gautamiputra Sri Yajna Satakarni, Skanda Sri Satakarni and Vijaya Satakarni had issued some silver coins. These coins bear life like portraits on the obverse Roman tradition. The legends are in Brahmi script and Prakrit language. The reverse of these coins bear a six arched hill and Ujjain symbol. Some of their coins bear indigenous languages. Gautamiputra Satakarni, did not issue any silver coins but the counterstruck silver coins of his rival, the western Kshatrapa

ruler Nahapana are significant with a hill symbol and a legend *Rano Gotamiptasa Siri Satakanisa* on oneside and the Ujjain symbol on the other side.

|  |   |
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|  <p>Coin of Siri Sadavahana. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/adam-vidarbha_region/5ec6ddf2f2cdb6.59985145-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/adam-vidarbha_region/5ec6ddf2f2cdb6.59985145-160.jpg</a></p>                |  <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/adam-vidarbha_region/5ec6ddf31f1b82.32125784-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/adam-vidarbha_region/5ec6ddf31f1b82.32125784-160.jpg</a></p> |
|  <p>½ Karshapana of Rajno Siri Satakarni. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/nasik_city/5ec6d70343e466.15690342-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/nasik_city/5ec6d70343e466.15690342-160.jpg</a></p>                      |  <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/nasik_city/5ec6d703692733.13611202-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/nasik_city/5ec6d703692733.13611202-160.jpg</a></p>                    |
|  <p>Coin of Satakarni I. made of Potin. Weighs 4.64 gm.20.5mm <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/pauni_city/5ec6d9b74f63c1.12706778-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/pauni_city/5ec6d9b74f63c1.12706778-160.jpg</a></p> |  <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/pauni_city/5ec6d9b76bafe1.48604447-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/pauni_city/5ec6d9b76bafe1.48604447-160.jpg</a></p>                   |

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| <p>1 Karshapana of Satakarni. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee32a43201.44349277-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee32a43201.44349277-160.jpg</a></p>                  | <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee32aa6546.27789339-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee32aa6546.27789339-160.jpg</a></p> | <p>1 Karshapana of Satakarni. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee3aadbfe2.79944614-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee3aadbfe2.79944614-160.jpg</a></p>                       | <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee3ab43d82.27603222-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee3ab43d82.27603222-160.jpg</a></p> |
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| <p>1 Drachm of Sri Satakarni, 2.67 grms, 17mm. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee434dac99.01020659-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee434dac99.01020659-160.jpg</a></p> | <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee4359b390.71361270-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee4359b390.71361270-160.jpg</a></p> | <p>Coin of Satakarni. Made of Potin, 2.67gms, 17mm. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee4ebf8456.59629808-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee4ebf8456.59629808-160.jpg</a></p> | <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee4ec32ad0.42809069-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5ebee4ec32ad0.42809069-160.jpg</a></p> |



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|  <p>1 Drachm of Siva Siri Pulumavi, 2.25gms, 20mm. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5e beef67876651.56995808-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5e beef67876651.56995808-160.jpg</a></p> |  <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5e beef678b7f98.21817304-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5e beef678b7f98.21817304-160.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Coin of Gautamiputra Sri Yajna Sri Satakarni. 2.18 gms, 16mm. potin coin. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5e beef6f061d53.20118906-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5e beef6f061d53.20118906-160.jpg</a></p> |  <p><a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5e beef6f243a38.68621700-160.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/satavahana_empire/5e beef6f243a38.68621700-160.jpg</a></p> |



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*Rāṇo Gotamiputasa Siri-Sātakaṇisa*

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A coin from nasik. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b9/Elephant\\_coin\\_of\\_Gautamiputra\\_Satakarni.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b9/Elephant_coin_of_Gautamiputra_Satakarni.jpg)



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*Raño Vāsiṭhiputasa Siri-Puḷumāvisa*

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Indian ship on lead coin of Vasisthiputra  
Pulumavi.

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Coin of Vasisthiputra Sri Pulumavi.  
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Vasisthiputra Siri Satakarni.  
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Coin of Vasisthiputra Satakarni.  
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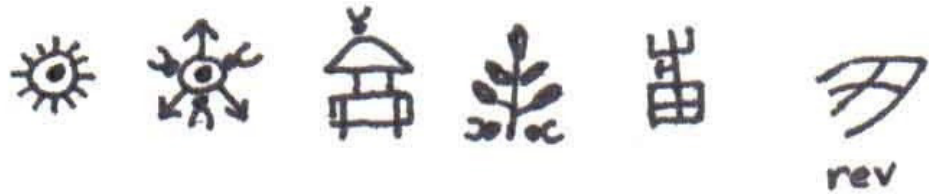
*Rañō Gotamiputasa Siri-Yāṇa-Sūtakanisa*

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Gautamiputra\_Rajni\_Shri\_Satakarni.jpg  
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commons/thumb/6/60/Coin\_legend\_  
Yajna\_Sri\_Satakarni.jpg/1024px-Coin\_  
legend\_Yajna\_Sri\_Satakarni.jpg

### 3.2: Sangam Age Coins

Studying and understanding the coins unearthed from the regions bounded by seas on the east and west of the southern India, we can identify two prominent regions – the Tamiladesa (South) and the Dakshinapatha (Deccan). The Tamiladesa was divided into three independent states viz. Chera, Pandya and Chola whereas the Deccan was an integral part of the Mauryan empire. The local coins of these periods are coming to light in the recent days. Many hoards of the silver punch marked coins, circulated in the Mauryan empire are found scattered throughout the Tamiladesa. Three worn specimens of the punch marked coins are discovered by Rev. R. Cladwell in a tumulus in the Coimbatore region. This discovery is made in 1800 CE which suggests that these punch marked silver coins were used in this region until the Pandyas issued their own coins. The Boddinayakanuru coin hoard supports this suggestion. These coins bear five symbols. The coins have symbols similar to the Mauryan coins; *the Sun and the six – armed symbols along with three new additions such as; a stupa, a leafy tree and a trident battle axe in railing. Fish, a heraldic symbol of the Pandynes is shown on the reverse of these coins.*

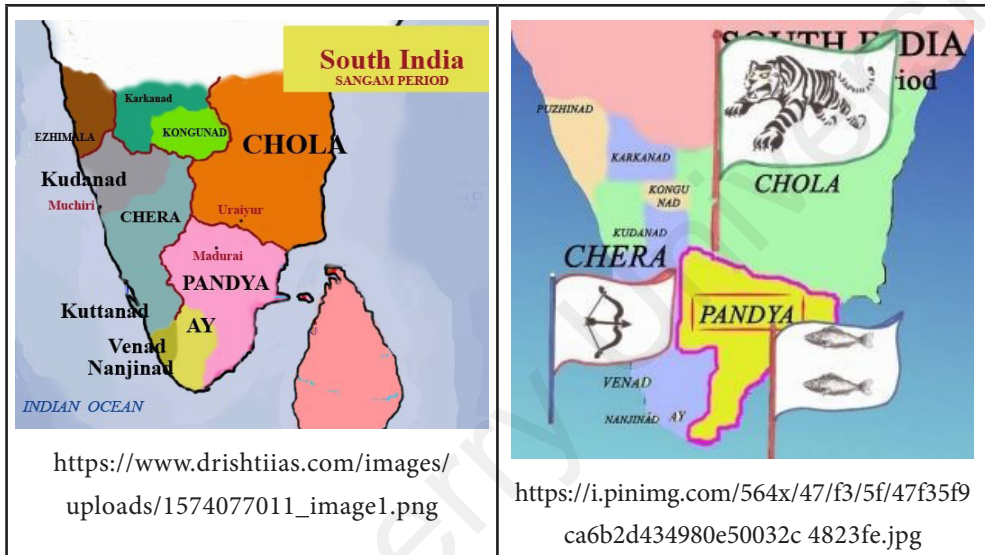




Sun Six armed symbol Stupa leafy tree Trident battle axe Fish

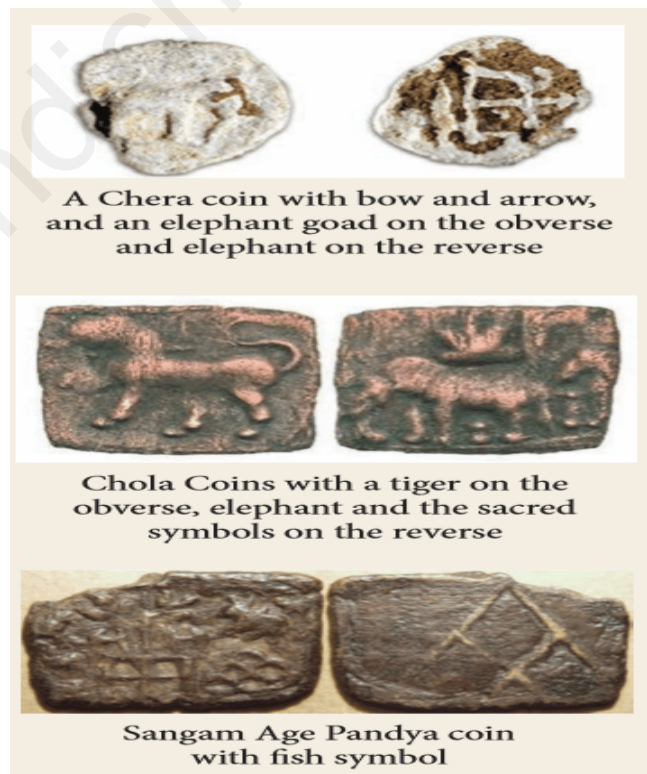
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According to the Sangam literature, the land of Tamils was ruled by 'three crowned kings' of the Chera, Chola and Pandyan dynasties assisted by a set of minor chieftains (Velir) with the names of at least seven of them mentioned as generous patrons of the Sangams. Another minor chieftain mentioned in this literature is Malaiyaman chieftains who ruled Tirukkovalur or Kovalur (Tirukkkoilur). According to modern estimates; the Chera Nadu (Land of the Cheras) included major parts of modern Kerala along with a cadet branch called KonguCheras situated east of the Palakkad Gap. The Chola Nadu lay in the North-east between the northern and southern streams of the Vellar river on the eastern coast of Tamil Nadu. Pandya Nadu covered the land south of Chola Nadu till Kanyakumari reaching the southern tip of the Indian Peninsula with parts of Western and Eastern sea coasts. Another cultural division was Tondai Nadu consisting of the land North of Chola Nadu till the Tirupati Hill and the land between the range of Eastern Ghats in the West and the sea in the East. This region had the important city of Kanchipuram. These three dynasties find mention in Ashokan Edicts as bordering the farthest limits of the Empire.

The Tamil rulers also find mention in the Inscription of Kharavela (2nd century B.C.E.) who states that he defeated a 113-year-old confederacy of Tamil rulers. The early capitals of the three powers are said to Karuvur/Vanji (Karur near Tiruchirappalli) ((thus the name Carura Regia Cerebothri for the Cheras by Ptolemy) in case of the Cheras, Uraiyur/Urandai (part of Tiruchirappalli) for Cholas and Korkoi initially and Madurai later in case of the Pandys. The capital of Tondai Nadu was Kanchipuram was established by Tondaiman Ilantiraiyan, a local ruler of the region in the first century C.E. Most of the Sangam Age kingdoms had riverine ports as their main establishments for trade and associated with the finds of coins in modern times. Thus, Amaravati river near Karur, Kaver river near Uraiyur and Vaigai near Madurai served important functions for conducting this riverine trade with both hinterland Tamilakam as well as the sea ports mentioned in the Periplus. These sites today form major receptacles of coin deposits found in the region. About the sea ports, the Periplus mentions ports of Muziris and Nelkynda described as "Muziris being in the Kingdom of Cerobothra(Chera) and Nelkynda is described as belonging to the Kingdom of the Pandion (Pandya)" The period of Sangam Age has been pragmatically set between 300 B.C.E. and 300 C.E. according to leading experts of the period's history. These have been set



after considering the information in the Epigraphs, literary sources both Tamil and Indian including Greco - Roman sources like Megasthenes, Ptolemy and the unknown author of the Periplus apart from archaeological findings including coins.

### **Earliest Coins of Sangam Age - Tamilakam**

The initial Sangam Age did not see the production of any coins as the vast Mauryan Empire's coinage of silver punch-marked Karshapanas flowed into the three kingdoms as evident by numerous hoards of these coins found in the region of these kingdoms in modern times. The Mauryan coins continued to be used till the middle of the second century B.C.E. when the inflow of Mauryan coins dwindled in view of the decline of the Empire. In this period, the Pandyans issued their first coinage in all probabilities as evident by the finding of Punchmarked coins in the Bodinayakanuru hoard found and studied first in the 1951 by D. D. Kosambi. This hoard has unique coins which resemble the Mauryan coins having the common Mauryan emblems of Sun and six-armed symbol; however, the other three emblems are unique to this coinage and include a stupa-like structure, a leafy tree and a trident battle axe in railing. Most importantly, the reverse side has a stylized fish emblem recognized as the heraldic emblem of the Pandyas by most sources. The Pandyas were probably the oldest dynasty ruling the Korkoi-Madurai region rich in pearls and fishing industry. The flag of the Pandyas had the fish symbol on it with the Sanskrit word 'Mina'. Fish used by the Pandyan monarch in his titles 'Minavan' 'the fish beholder' as seen in his devotion to the tutelary deity 'Minakshi' 'the fish eyed one'. The Tamil word for fish carp 'Kayal' was adopted for Madurai initially as 'Kayal' also probably means "a lagoon opening into the sea". Hence it is befitting that Pandyan coinage adopted the Kayal as its emblem on its early coins found in the region.

This coinage is thus by far the oldest coinage of the Tamil-speaking region due to both its technique which is uniquely Indian as well as the closeness in iconography to the

Mauryan coinage. Recent studies by R. Krishnamurthy have thrown up newer coins with more variations in the other three emblems but with the stylized fish emblem and common Sun and six-armed symbol. The other unique aspect of the coins of Bodinayakanuru hoard coins is their lower weight range of 1.47 grams which is almost half the weight of the Mauryan Karshapanas.

### Elephants on Chera, Chola and Pandya Coinage?

As per retired professor of University of Madras, P Shanmugam - there are at least 1000 different symbols embossed on coins from that period. Elephant, sun and mountain, appeared more often than others. These symbols must have reflected day to day life. Objects that powerfully represented daily life were embossed more often than others on coins. Punch-marked coins actually come from the pre-Mouria period (before emperor Ashoka). The Chera, Chola, Pandyas of the Sangam period used it. Initially, they printed each symbol separately, but as the demand increased they started printing the symbols together on coins using a single mould. Most Sangam period coins, excavated from various parts of Tamil Nadu, were made of copper. There are some silver coins, but gold coins have not been found so far. Some coins even had legends in ancient Tamil Brahmi embossed on them.

In Buddhist iconography, the elephant is associated with Queen Maya or Mahamaya, the mother of Gautama Buddha. Further according to the Buddhist Philosophy the elephant is associated with the birth of Buddha and the stability of the "Dhamma" too. The elephant symbolises royal authority and majesty. The appearance of the punch marked coins from c. 4th BCE coincides with the rise of Buddhism in India. Elephants have a special place in Buddhist mythology and religion with them representing the mental strength. With the Mauryans emerging as an imperial power and exercising control over most parts of the Indian sub-continent, the elephants must be symbolic of the strength and might of the Mauryan Empire. The elephants had a place so important in Ancient Indian army that, an army without elephants has been compared to a forest without a lion, a kingdom without a king or as a valor unaided by weapons.

Chanakya, the great brahman co-founder of the Mauryan dynasty credited South India with the strongest elephants in the known world. It is possible that Ashoka entered into friendly alliance with the Tamil kings to provide their elephants for war against Kalinga. Rajaraja chola is said to have possessed 60,000 war elephants. Compare this with Mauryas or Guptas who could not field higher than 20,000. Probably the first use of elephants in war, dates back to India only. Even they are mentioned in the great epics of

India, Ramayana and Mahabharata. The famous incident of Bhima killing of an elephant named Aswathama, to conquer over Drona is well

known. These huge beasts were the backbone of the any Indian army, often heavily armored from top to bottom. We can infer that the representation of the elephants on these coins are either suggestive of some religious importance or refer to the royal power and strength. (<https://ancient-indian-coins.blogspot.com/2018/07/sangam-period-coinage-300-bc-200-ad.html>)

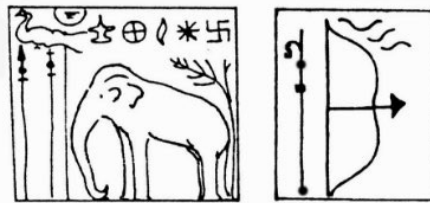
### 3.2.1: Coins of Cheras

The Cheras who ruled modern day Kerala issued coinage similar to Pandyan coinage especially in terms of weight. They issued uninscribed coinage with their heraldic symbol of bow-and-arrow which was employed both on the obverse as well as reverse of their coinage. The use of the elephant along with hills and serpentine symbols is said to recall the ecological system of the Chera country which was known for its elephants. The elephant surmounted by multiple religious symbols seems to recall the Pandyan coinage except when one sees the reverse emblem of bow-and-arrow which must have been the main marker of Chera coinage.

In a later series, the elephant is also replaced by a horse or a bull or in one case by the lion as an emblem. Their later day coinage had titles of kings like 'Mak-kotai' (much inspired from the Roman imperial portraiture), KuttuvanKotai and 'Kol-Irum-Porai' in Tamil Brahmi with images of kings in the first two cases and image of a warrior standing below a decorated gate both inspired by existing Roman coin prototypes of the first and second century C.E. The use of impure silver for the portrait coins recalls the portrait coins of the Satavahanas who were similarly inspired by Roman portrait coins to issue similar coins from areas ruled by them in the Deccan in and around the same period.

The Chera rulers issued die – struck uninscribed and inscribed square coins in copper. The Chera coins have the bow and arrow and elephants on their coins and the inscriptional coins have legends above the elephant reading; *Koliporian*, *Koliporian Yatan*, and *Imporai*. Besides the copper coins a small silver coin also is found with a blank reverse side. Interestingly, this coin bears the clean shaven head of a king facing to right. This coin is so significant that the idea of the shaved head was borrowed from the Roman coinage. These coins were supposed entered in India via trade relations during the First century BCE to first century CE.

**Sangam Chera kingdom ( 300 BC - 250 AD )**  
**Copper -3.5 Grams ,2cm X 1.8 cm**



Chera coin of the Sangam age. [https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Dp7vjv4o2gY/W1DjhvggYRI/AAAAAAAAEHM/plj66IrLnc0J5SMPY\\_YhZ0sl3X\\_HmL54QCLcBGAs/s1600/Untitled.png](https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Dp7vjv4o2gY/W1DjhvggYRI/AAAAAAAAEHM/plj66IrLnc0J5SMPY_YhZ0sl3X_HmL54QCLcBGAs/s1600/Untitled.png)



Horse on the Chera coin of Sangam period. <https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/horse-on-sangam-chera-coin.jpg>



Multiple bow and arrow punches on the coins of Cheras. <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcT-ThTWiZw2kgNjL2Sw3oaF-yfkdeLy11LBwg&usqp=CAU>



Uninscribed chera coin of Sangam age. <https://sarmaya.in/museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/NumismaticsCheraCopperUn-inscribed100BCE-250CE.jpg>



Sangam age Chera coin. [https://www.forumancientcoins.com/india/southind/chera/images/chera\\_ae1.jpg](https://www.forumancientcoins.com/india/southind/chera/images/chera_ae1.jpg)

### 3.2.2: Coins of Cholas

The Cholas initially were believed to have not issued any coinage in copper as they were not found in any excavations in and around their capital city of Uraiyur (Biddulph 1968). However, later excavations at Kaveripattinam yielded a square copper uninscribed Chola coin from their stratified layers. Besides many other coins are routinely found in and around Karur from the bed of the Amaravati river as surface finds and a few are also reported from the South Pennar river bed near Tirukkkoilur. These coins are believed to be representing the earliest Chola coinage based on their reverse depiction of the Chola emblem of Tiger. R. Krishnamurthi has reported 42 such coins with different obverse features including the Elephant (at times replaced or with horse) in different forms like the Pandyan and Chera coinage with a rampant Tiger emblem on the reverse side.

Some coins of the Cholas are found in the North Arcot district with a horse on one side a river (zig zag line probably referring to a river) on the other side. The coins unearthed from Andipalli in North Arcot district show the Satavahana influence. These coins bear a legend *Atinannan etiran chandan* meaning Atinnan the son and successor of Chanda. The reverse of this coin has a river symbol. These coins refer to a chieftain of the North Arcot district.



Coin of the Sangam Chola period. [https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-VBDc\\_jITr6s/W1Dk8fngyJI/AAAAAAAAEHY/y37wZFL34SgBBDQXgEHJA9rQt4OFbsC\\_gCLcBGAs/s1600/Untitled.png](https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-VBDc_jITr6s/W1Dk8fngyJI/AAAAAAAAEHY/y37wZFL34SgBBDQXgEHJA9rQt4OFbsC_gCLcBGAs/s1600/Untitled.png)





Sangam age copper coin of the Cholas.  
<https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/sangam-chola-square-copper-coin.jpg>



Sangam Chola coin. <https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/sangam-chola-coin.jpg>

### 3.2.3: Coins of Pandyas

The next prototype of Pandyan coins are copper coins with a variety of animal emblems some lone in front of posts (Vedic sacrifice posts?), some accompanied by prominent tortoise emblems depicting the riverine ecology around the Pandyan kingdom. However, the main identifying emblem on both series is the reverse stylised fish on all these coins. One particular coin in this series stands out for a Tamil Brahmi legend PE- RU- VA-LU-THI along with a horse like figure and reverse stylised fish emblem. According to R. Krishnamurthi the coin's legend is palaeographically similar to the Bhattiprolu inscription (especially the letter 'Va') and a Tamil Brahmi epigraph found near Mangulam near Madurai and thus it can be dated to around 200 B.C.E.

The next series in Pandyan coins is a copper coin with obverse image of an Elephant surmounted by various temple or other religious emblems on the obverse with a trisula standard in front of the elephant. In some coins, the elephant is substituted with a bull; in yet others, a tree-in-railing surrounded by animal and other floral and faunal emblems. Yet other coins, the tree in railing or a six-arched hill becomes the main obverse emblem. All these coins are characterised by the reverse stylised fish emblem which helps us attribute them to the Pandyas of the Sangam Age. A single solitary series with an obverse king's portrait with a border of tiny circles (representing pearls according to Krishnamurthi) most probably inspired by Roman coins and a reverse image of a tank with tortoises is attributed by Krishnamurthi to the Pandyan rulers of the Sangama period.



Very rare coin of large elephant belonging to the Pandyan Sangama age.  
[https://images.vcoins.com/product\\_image/36/9/6/9BsNCE4rF2yWxpY83oaXf7ZnQq675N.jpg](https://images.vcoins.com/product_image/36/9/6/9BsNCE4rF2yWxpY83oaXf7ZnQq675N.jpg)



Bronze coin of the Sangam period Pandyan kingdom.  
[https://2.bp.blogspot.com/-jf3Y2F3Uo\\_g/WLcDNl2n6fI/AAAAAAAAAvA/yc1wOyyhYAsZzPkIvwNhjy92b0noHWcAwCLcB/s320/8%2BMAC4988-442.01.jpg](https://2.bp.blogspot.com/-jf3Y2F3Uo_g/WLcDNl2n6fI/AAAAAAAAAvA/yc1wOyyhYAsZzPkIvwNhjy92b0noHWcAwCLcB/s320/8%2BMAC4988-442.01.jpg)



A Pandyan Nandi (Bull) on the obverse and fishes on the river. A coin found in Srilanka. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ef/Pandyan\\_bull\\_coin\\_with\\_fishes.jpg/1920px-Pandyan\\_bull\\_coin\\_with\\_fishes.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ef/Pandyan_bull_coin_with_fishes.jpg/1920px-Pandyan_bull_coin_with_fishes.jpg)



A temple between hills and elephant on the Pandyan coin found in Srilanka, preserved in British museum.  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/30/Temple\\_between\\_hill\\_symbols\\_and\\_elephant\\_coin\\_of\\_the\\_Pandya\\_Sri\\_Lanka\\_1st\\_century\\_CE.jpg/237px-Temple\\_between\\_hill\\_symbols\\_and\\_elephant\\_coin\\_of\\_the\\_Pandya\\_Sri\\_Lanka\\_1st\\_century\\_CE.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/30/Temple_between_hill_symbols_and_elephant_coin_of_the_Pandya_Sri_Lanka_1st_century_CE.jpg/237px-Temple_between_hill_symbols_and_elephant_coin_of_the_Pandya_Sri_Lanka_1st_century_CE.jpg)



Silver half karshapana of the Pandyan age. [https://images.vcoins.com/product\\_image/36/F/6/fH9MB3ip23Dndj7X6ZErsHm5Zo8ytR.jpg](https://images.vcoins.com/product_image/36/F/6/fH9MB3ip23Dndj7X6ZErsHm5Zo8ytR.jpg)

### 3.2.4. Coins of Malayaman Chieftains

Malayaman (or Malaiyaman) Chieftains were considered as one of the 'last seven patrons' of the Sangam Age. They ruled from the town of Kovalur (modern Tirrukoilur) which was the main town of the geo-cultural unit, Miladu Nadu (probably a shortening of Malai Nadu or Land of Hills). Chiefs of this dynasty readily took the title Chedirayan and delighted in their rule of hill countries. This clan's most famous king was Malaiyamān ThirumudiKāri. Their royal emblem featured a horse, depicted on their issued coins. The Malayamans issued copper coins of squarish shape which bore their royal emblem, a horse (sometimes facing left, and sometimes right). In some of the early coins, the legend "Malayaman" above the horse motif decorates the coin obverse. Most of their coins carried the symbolic map of their territory on the reverse represented by "a wide curved river with fishes flowing in it, and a hillock on side of the river." This depicted the territory over which they ruled. The Malayaman coins generally weighed from 2–4 g and were thin, unlike the contemporary Chera coins.



Copper coin of the Malayaman Sangam coin. [https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/-cbwm3xC5rwQ/W1Bqz32T12I/AAAAAAAAEDA/jElks4ULzx8dhMzJO0wYsokwFD\\_mc7JnwCHMYCw/s640/Screenshot\\_2018-07-19-16-05-19-356.jpeg](https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/-cbwm3xC5rwQ/W1Bqz32T12I/AAAAAAAAEDA/jElks4ULzx8dhMzJO0wYsokwFD_mc7JnwCHMYCw/s640/Screenshot_2018-07-19-16-05-19-356.jpeg)



[https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/-GKaBrj2UVjY/W1CIQFW\\_IWI/AAAAAAAAEDw/Taa2KAm3l9saOwbL6fl08ORR01BAAkO\\_ACHMYCw/s640/Screenshot\\_2018-07-19-18-15-32-405.jpeg](https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/-GKaBrj2UVjY/W1CIQFW_IWI/AAAAAAAAEDw/Taa2KAm3l9saOwbL6fl08ORR01BAAkO_ACHMYCw/s640/Screenshot_2018-07-19-18-15-32-405.jpeg)

**Obverse** Horse standing right, altar in front;  
**Reverse** Map illustrating the location of Tirucoilur (the Malayaman capital): three hills in the distance, the river Ponnaiyar flowing from **right to left**, the town within its curve below, a road (?) at left.  
<https://ancient-indian-coins.blogspot.com/2018/07/sangam-period-coinage-300-bc-200-ad.html>

### Post Sangam Tamil Coinage

The Sangama Age came to an end in around 300 C.E. and the land was supposedly subjected to a foreign rule by a new set of rulers called Kalabhras (Kalappalar) who disposed all the three sets of crowned kings (Adhirajas) who were confined by the new evil rulers. One ruler of this dynasty, AcchutaVikkanta of the Kalabhrakula is mentioned by a Buddhist source, Vinaya Vincchaya. According to Dr. P.L. Gupta, coins with the name, Achivikathaon one side and Kalabhraware claimed to

have been found, some with only one legend with the other side having faunal motifs like “elephant, bull, tiger, horse, crab or the figure of a Jaina Tirthankara.” (Gupta: 1969). The Tamilakam thus saw a relative numismatic ‘dark age’ where apart from the Brahmanical sources; few or no coins exist to illustrate the history of the obscure period. This period was probably when Buddhism and Jainism rose in the land disposing Brahmanical hierarchy from the region. The Cholas totally disappeared from the Tamil landscape though a branch emerged in Andhra country at Rayalaseema claiming connection to the Uraiyur branch in the sixth century C.E. [https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp\\_content/S000829IC/P001738/M028925/ET/1523267544P09-M22-AncientTamilCoinagefromtheSangamaPeriod-ET.pdf](https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000829IC/P001738/M028925/ET/1523267544P09-M22-AncientTamilCoinagefromtheSangamaPeriod-ET.pdf)



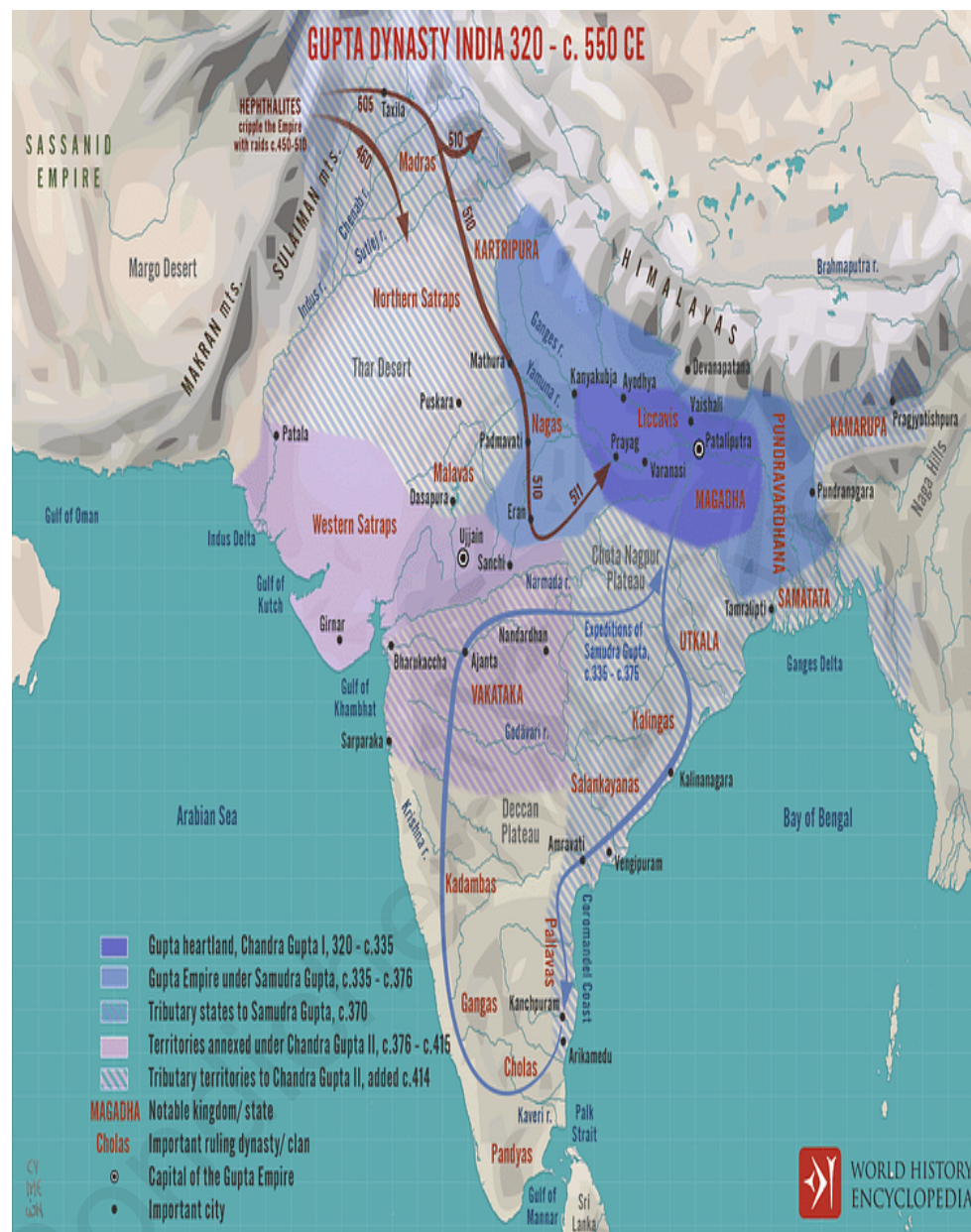
### 3.3: Gupta Coinage

After the fall of the Mauryan empire the people and the principalities re established independent local, tribal and monarchical administration. They issued coins in copper and silver. The Gupta dynasty rose out of a small territory and lasted for more than two hundred years. The king named Gupta and his grandson Chandra Gupta were considered as the paramount rulers of the Gupta kingdom. The latter is responsible for expanding the kingdom far and wide. Samudra Gupta, the son and successor of Chandra Gupta made many conquests and occupied territories in the South – eastern coast and as well as in the north – west. He performed the *asvamedha* sacrifice. His son Chandra Gupta II added parts of Central India, Gujarat and Saurashtra to the Gupta throne.

Samudra Gupta had some setbacks at the hands of the Hunas who invaded the Indian territories during this period. The battle between the Hunas and the Guptas lasted for a long time and Skanda Gupta, the successor of Samudra Gupta defended the country from the Huna invasions and attained victory. The western part of the Gupta empire started crumbling soon after the accession of Budha Gupta and after his rule the Gupta territories were confined to Bihar, Bengal and some parts of Orissa. The rulers of the Gupta period during its declining period were Chandra Gupta III, Prakasaditya, Vinaya Gupta, Narasimha Gupta, Kumara Gupta III and Vishnu Gupta.

The Gupta coins were mainly issued in gold. It is interesting to note that a contemporary poet has termed the phenomenon of issuing coins in gold as 'rain of gold'. The Gupta kings were seen standing on the gold coins apparently to be in the Kushana coins; the king standing at an altar on the obverse and Ardoksho seated on a throne on the reverse. The Gupta coins are more skilful and superior in their execution and they seem more original. The early coins of the Guptas had the standing king of the Kushana





<https://www.worldhistory.org/img/r/p/1500x1500/14917.png.webp?v=169111788380>



Coin of the Kushana King Vasudeva II and the standard coin type of Samudra Gupta.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/07/Coin\\_of\\_VasudevaII.jpg/576px-Coin\\_of\\_VasudevaII.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/07/Coin_of_VasudevaII.jpg/576px-Coin_of_VasudevaII.jpg)

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b2/Samudragupta\\_circa\\_335-380\\_CE.jpg/576px-Samudragupta\\_circa\\_335-380\\_CE.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b2/Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE.jpg/576px-Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE.jpg)

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b2/Samudragupta\\_circa\\_335-380\\_CE.jpg/576px-Samudragupta\\_circa\\_335-380\\_CE.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b2/Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE.jpg/576px-Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE.jpg)



Lakshmi seated on a lotus in the Samudra  
Gupta coin. (414 CE). <https://i.pinimg.com/564x/69/47/fc/6947fcb4cdec4801387187a011e60cb0.jpg>



Lakshmi seated on a lotus in  
the Modern day silver coin.  
<https://rukminim1.flixcart.com/image/850/1000/kvr01ow0/coin/g/w/2/na-1-rlc-10-ms-maa-silver-original-imag8kvsmhethg6h.jpeg?q=20>

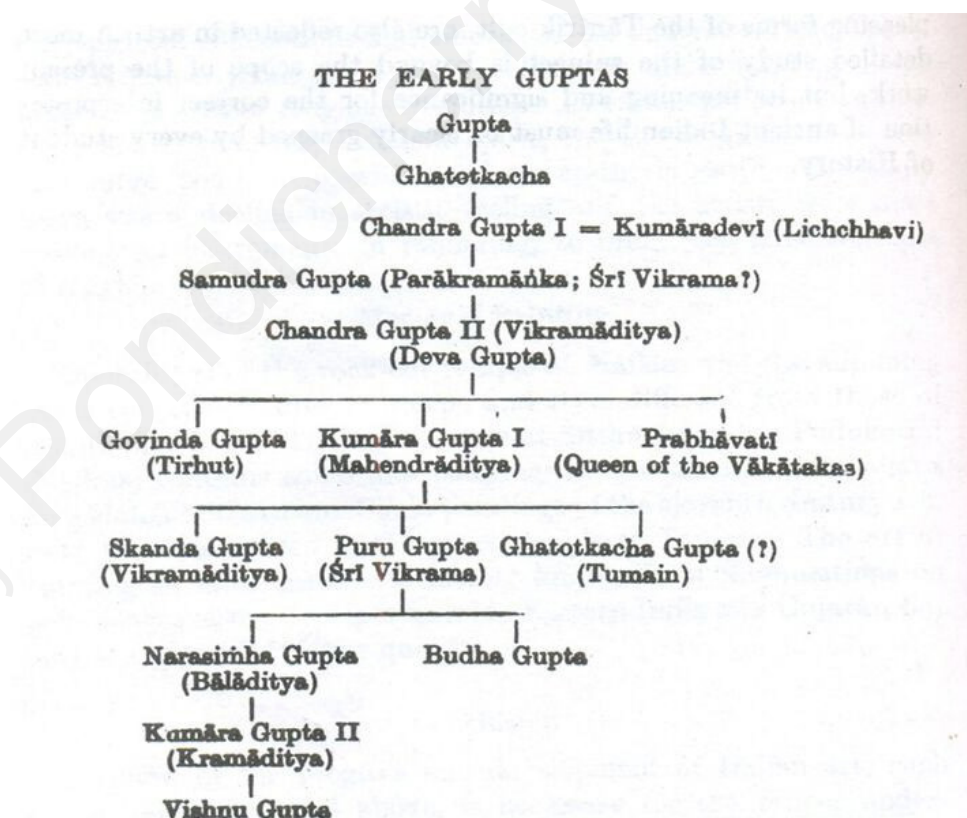
The Gupta rulers had a spear or a standard or a battle axe or a sword or a bow in their left hand instead of the trident in the Kushana coins. *Garudadhvaja* with the royal insignia is seen in the right side of the coin. Another interesting feature in the Gupta coinage is that they introduced inscribing the name or title of the king perpendicularly such as in the Chinese tradition on the left hand. They also placed a Brahmi inscription around the king's portrait. On the reverse goddess Ardoksho seated on a throne holding a cornucopia in the left arm and *pasa* in her right, was retained by the Guptas but in the later period she was transformed into the Indian goddess Lakshmi. She is shown with a lotus in her hand, seated on a throne and later on a lotus which can be seen even today. The name of the deity is replaced with the name of the king who issues the coins during the Gupta period.

All the rulers of the Gupta dynasty had issued one coin in common i.e., holding a bow in the left hand and an arrow in the right hand. The coins of Chandra Gupta II and Kumara Gupta I had this particular style in many variations. There were many varieties and sub varieties of the coins which depict the king holding the bow in the left or right hand and the kings are seen dressed in a coat or bare bodied in some portraits. Samudra

Gupta issued coins with a spear or a standard. Chandra Gupta II also issued coins of this type. The interesting coin issued by Kacha Gupta, who occupied the throne for a short period had the *chakradhvaja* (holding a standard surmounted by a *chakra*) on it. On one coin Kumara Gupta is

seen as holding a coin instead of the standard. Samudra Gupta had issued different type of coin in which he is shown holding a battle – axe. In this coin his right hand is on his hip and to his right stands a dwarf.

Besides these coins, the Gupta rulers issued sixteen different coins types which are unique in artistic excellence and quality. In one of the coin, the king and queen were portrayed. Chandra Gupta I is said to be the king who issued this kind of coins for the first time. Kumara Gupta and Skanda Gupta also issued coins in this style but the king and queen are standing face to face. The coins issued by Chandra Gupta I are so original and fresh in their concept that many scholars do not believe that these coins were actually issued by him. They mentioned that these coins are issued by Samudra Gupta as the commemorative coins for his parents. The coins also bear the names of his parents Chandra Gupta I and Kumara Devi. But the coins issued by Kumara Gupta and Skanda Gupta do not disclose the names of their partners. Thus, the coins issued by Chandra Gupta are believed to be issued by Samudra Gupta.



[https://www.jatland.com/w/images/f/ff/Genealogy\\_of\\_Early\\_Guptas.jpg](https://www.jatland.com/w/images/f/ff/Genealogy_of_Early_Guptas.jpg)

The king playing *vina* sitting on a couch is another interesting coin type issued by the Gupta rulers. Samudra Gupta and Kumara Gupta I



issued such coins. These coins are issued to pay a graceful tribute to the king's accomplishments. The kings are seen in Indian dress, sitting cross legged on an ornate couch playing the Indian lute. Chandra Gupta II also issued similar type of coin but he is seen holding an object in his hand. The numismatic art of the Guptas has the;

- Excellent modelling of the kings' figure
- Skilful delineation of the features and
- The careful attention to the details which place these coins amongst the best expressions of the art.

The coins depicting the hunting scenes exhibit the royal interest in hunting. Some coins stand as the specimens for their interest in riding. Samudra Gupta's tiger slayer coins show his keen interest in hunting the wild animals where as the coins of Chandra Gupta, his son had issued the lion slayer coins. Kumara Gupta I issued both tiger and lion slayer coins. These coins show the king shooting the wild tiger and lion with bow and arrow. One coin of Kumara Gupta depicts the king sitting in front of the slain lion. The coin exhibited in the Lucknow museum shows Chandra Gupta II slaying a lion with a sword. Similarly, the coins of Chandra Gupta II and his son Kumara Gupta I show their interest in horse riding from their horse – riding coins. Kumara Gupta I also issued coins riding an elephant. Later, Kumara Gupta I had combined both the slayer and rider type motifs into one. On one of his coin he is seen riding a horse and killing a rhinoceros and on another coin he is shown riding an elephant and killing a lion. He is also portrayed with a dwarf male attendant who is holding a *chhatra* at the back. This coin is similar to the coin issued by Samudra Gupta.

Samudra Gupta and Kumara Gupta I had issued coins separately to distribute among the priests called as *dakshina* coins. The priests who participated in the *Asvamedha* sacrifices performed by the Gupta kings Samudra Gupta and Kumara Gupta

I. These coins show the sacrificial horse before the sacrificial post (*yupa*) on the obverse and on the reverse the goddess of victory *vijaya* is seen with a fly whisk. The *Chakra – Purusha* coins issued by Chandra Gupta II shows his worship to the *chakra purusha*. In these coins the *purusha* is seen bestowing upon the king three round objects. Scholars opined that the *purusha* had bestowed the three worlds or the three royal powers to the king. Some of the coins issued by Kumara Gupta I have three standing

figures whose representation is not ascertained yet. Kumara Gupta I issued coins in which god Kumara (*Kartikeya*) is seen sitting on a peacock.

Like the motifs the inscriptions on the Gupta coins are unique. The inscriptions that encircle the motif are in the form of verses celebrating the king's glory on the earth and the bliss future in heaven through his merits. The coins of Samudra Gupta have six legends, Chandra Gupta II have ten different legends where as the coins of Kumara Gupta offer no less than twenty – four legends.

### **Ardoksho / Lakshmi/ Durga?**

On the reverse of all the coins issued by the Gupta rulers, the goddess is seen either sitting or standing on a couch / lotus. The goddess on these coins is first believed to be originated from the Ardoksho of Kushana coinage which later turned into the Indian counterpart, Lakshmi. Here it is significant to note that not all the coins have the Lakshmi alone but some have the goddess seated on a lion, may be identified as Durga. When the goddess is seen seated on a *makara* (crocodile), she is ascertained to be Ganga. The depiction of Ganga and Yamuna deities in the sculptures is common during the Gupta period. Some other coins show the goddess sitting on a wicker stool. Divinity in profile is only known in the Indian art traditions.

### **Silver coins of Guptas**

Silver coins of Guptas follow the standard of 30 grains (Kṣatrapa weigh standard). Actually there weigh vary between 27-34 grains. The issuance of silver coinage was initiated by Candragupta II after defeating Rudrasimha III. No silver coins of the early Gupta rulers are known. Candragupta's silver issues closely follow the Kṣatrapa coins. The king's bust appears on the obverse with the date in Gupta era at the back or in front of the king. The three-arched hill of the Kṣatrapa coins is replaced here by the figure of Garuḍa but these coins are only a few in number and they all are confined to the western region. Kumāragupta I followed his father and issued similar coins in quite a large number in the GujaratSaurashtra territories of his empire. On the obverse of the silver coins of Kumāragupta I head of the king to right; degenerated copy of Greek letters to right. On the reverse of these issues there is a depiction of front facing Garuḍa and the legend around reads: *Paramabhāgavata mahārājādhirāja Śrī Kumāragupta Mahendrādityaḥ*. Metal of these coins is highly debased and at times



appears to be almost copper. The steady debasement indicates long duration of circulation of these coins in this region. He also introduced a new fantailed peacock type of silver coins of the same weight and fabric, replacing the Garuḍa motif. This type was meant for eastern part of the empire. But they are rare. The variety of fan tailed peacock depicted on these silver coins is reported mainly from Central India. It was issued only from the time of Kumāragupta I. The bust here is slightly different in style from the ones seen on the coins issued for the western territory. This is the type which was followed by the later powers like the Hunas, Maukharis and Vardhanas the only difference being the bust there faces left.



Depiction of the goddesses on the Gupta coins.

[https://images.vcoins.com/product\\_image/10/7/7fyWxK4LGes8w9xTSA2ckkF5Pa6F3G.jpg](https://images.vcoins.com/product_image/10/7/7fyWxK4LGes8w9xTSA2ckkF5Pa6F3G.jpg)

For eastern region Kumāragupta I introduced a silver coin which had on the obverse head of the king to right and on the reverse a peacock without-spread tail. Legend: around reading *Vijitāvaniravanipatiḥ Kumāragupto divamjayati*. Besides these, Skandagupta issued silver coins of both the above types – western and eastern. He also introduced two new types 5 having bull or a fire-altar on the reverse. The legend on these coins

reads *Paramabhāgavato Śrī Vikramāditya Skandaguptaḥ*. Budhagupta was the last ruler who issued silver coins.

### Copper and Lead Coins of the Guptas

Samudragupta, Candragupta II and Kumāragupta I issued copper coins. While only a copper coin of Samudragupta has so far come to light, coins of the other two rulers are known in seven or eight varieties and follow the gold or silver patterns for their obverse. The reverse device has been adopted from the royal seal i.e. Garuḍa with the wings spread at the top and the name and title of the king below it. From Vidiśā and Eran

in the Malwa region tiny copper coins have been reported in abundance. These coins resemble the coins of the Nāgas in form and fabric. They bear the name Rāmagupta. Rāmagupta may be identified with the brother of Candragupta II and the first husband of the queen Dhruvadevī known from the drama *Devī Candraguptam* by Viśākhadatta quoted in other literary sources. These coins are known in several varieties – lion seated to the left, lion standing to the right, Garuḍa with outspread wings, vase with or without a creeper etc. Lastly some square lead coins of Candragupta II, Kumāragupta I and Skandagupta have come to light in the recent years from Gujarat-Malwa region. They are in the tradition of the western Kṣatrapa lead coins.

### Gupta coins and their reference in inscriptions

There are several references to *dināras* in epigraphic sources yet it is imperative to discuss a few examples where transactions have been mentioned. The excellence of the Gupta gold currency, which was initiated probably by Candragupta I (c. 320-335 CE) or by Samudragupta (c.335-375 CE), is always celebrated in the numismatic literature on Indian coins, from the points of view of their intrinsic value, metrology and aesthetic visual appeal. The epigraphic evidence of the circulation of Gupta gold coins thus coincides with the actual presence of these coins, clearly demonstrated by the large number of coins that have been found in the northern part of the subcontinent. Of great significance are the five copperplate records (dated in Gupta era 124, 128, 163, one undated, but belonging to the time of Budhagupta and the final one in 224) came from a single site Damodarpur in north Bengal (*Puṇḍravardhanabhukti*).

There is a more or less common pattern in recording the process of land transactions in these documents. It begins with an introductory section recording the name of the reigning Gupta king and the provincial authority in *Puṇḍravardhanabhukti* (as *uparika/uparikamahārāja*), below whom was stationed the district authority (*viṣayapati*). The district authority had an office of administration (*adhiṣṭhānādhikaraṇa*) where closely functioned with him a few non-governmental figures and a record keeper (*pustapāla*) and a clerk (*kāyastha/prathama-kāyastha*). The second section usually contained an application for the intended purchase of a plot of land, the price of which was usually stated as per the prevalent land measurement unit in the area. The third section recorded the approval of the application by the record-keeper. This takes us to the fourth section dealing with the actual payment of the price of land. Next follows the actual transfer of the plot and the demarcation of the alienated plot, occasionally in the presence of witnesses (*pratyāvekṣa*).

The final section contained benedictory and imprecatory statements, the latter severely reprimanding those who appropriated donated plots. Most of the records speak of the purchase of plots which were then gifted to the donee who/which were usually religious persons (*brāhmaṇas*) or a shrine. Put simply these records are mostly sale-cum- gift deeds. It is in the context of the purchase of plots that these copperplates refer to coin-terms. The price of the plot of land is always mentioned as *dināra* which denoted the Gupta gold coin. Thus the five Damodarpur copperplates ranging in date from Gupta era 124 to 224 state that the price of a plot of *kulyavāpa* of land (measuring 38-48 bighās) was 3 *dināras* or Gupta gold coins.

These plots are usually described as unyielding (*aprada*), untilled (*aprahata*) and fallow (*khila*). Similar type of uncultivated plots and therefore bereft of any revenue (*apratikara/utpratikara/śūṇyapratikara*) also figure as having been purchased in copperplates of Gupta era 113, 120, 128 and 159; but these land transfers did not take place within *Koṭivarṣaviṣaya*. Here the price of the fallow plot was two *dināras* per *kulyavāpa*. First, the striking feature here is the transaction in landed property by payment in gold coins (*dināras*). This is the first time in the history of Guptas that land appears as a transactional commodity in terms of payment in the gold currency. No less significant is the scenario that the price of land per *kulyavāpa* remained constant at 3 *dināras* in *Koṭivarṣaviṣaya* for an entire century (124-224 Gupta era).

### The Gupta Coin Hoards


Several coin hoards of the Guptas have come to light. The first gold coin hoard of the Guptas was discovered at Kalighat in Kolkata (or the-then Calcutta) in the year 1783. As time passed more gold coin hoards of the Guptas came to light in the latter half of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century. Most significant hoards among them are;

- Bharsar (1851 CE),
- Jessor (1852 CE),
- Allahabad (1864 CE),
- Hoogly (1883 CE),
- Tanda (1885 CE), Kotwa (1886 CE),
- Basti (1887 CE),
- Hajipur (1893 CE)
- Tekri Debra (1912 CE)
- Kasarva (1912 CE),
- Sakori (1914 CE),
- Mithathal (1915 CE),
- Bamnala (1940 CE),
- Kusumbhi (1947 CE),
- Khairatal (1948 CE) and
- Kumarkham (1952 CE),
- Gankar-Umarpur or Ahiran hoard (2013).
- **Bayana hoard** discovered in 1946 CE is the largest hoard of the Gupta gold coins. This hoard comprises of about 2100 gold coins of which only 1821 were recovered.


[https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp\\_content/S000829IC/P001738/M023991/ET/1507699344P09-M16-CoinsoftheGuptas-ET.pdf](https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000829IC/P001738/M023991/ET/1507699344P09-M16-CoinsoftheGuptas-ET.pdf)



### Gupta coins – Chandra Gupta I

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  <p><a href="https://media.britishmuseum.org/media/Repository/Documents/2014_11/5_17/0beab4e5_862c_4d13_9bc9_a3da0120aa95/mid_01221128_001.jpg">https://media.britishmuseum.org/media/Repository/Documents/2014_11/5_17/0beab4e5_862c_4d13_9bc9_a3da0120aa95/mid_01221128_001.jpg</a></p> | <p>A coin depicting Chandragupta and Kumaradevi. The name <i>Chandra(-gupta)</i> appears vertically under the left arm of the king. This unique coin type of Chandragupta I was probably issued by his successor Samudragupta as a commemorative issue. <b>Obverse:</b> Kumaradeva and Chandragupta standing, legend to the left <i>Śrī Kumāradevā</i>, to the right / <i>Cha- ndra/gu-pta</i> vertically. <b>Reverse:</b> Goddess seated on lion, with the legend <i>Li-ccha-va-yah</i>.</p> |
|--|---|

### Gupta coins – Samudra Gupta

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  <p>Standard type coin of Samudra Gupta.<br/><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b2/Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE.jpg/576px-Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b2/Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE.jpg/576px-Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE.jpg</a></p>   | <p>Obverse legend: <i>Samara-shata-vitata-vijayo-jita-ripurajito-divam-jayati</i>. Translation: “The unconquered one who has conquered his enemies [and] has continuously attained victories in a hundred battles, wins heaven.” Alternative translation: “The conqueror of the unconquered fortresses of his enemies, whose victory was spread in hundreds of battles, conquers heaven.” (<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samudragupta#Coinage">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samudragupta#Coinage</a>)</p> |
|  <p>Asvamedha type coin of Samudra Gupta.<br/><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/85/Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE_Ashvamedha_type.jpg/720px-Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE_Ashvamedha_type.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/85/Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE_Ashvamedha_type.jpg/720px-Samudragupta_circa_335-380_CE_Ashvamedha_type.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Lyrical coin of Samudra Gupta.<br/><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4a/Samudragupta_Circa_335-380_CE_Lyrical_type.jpg/764px-Samudragupta_Circa_335-380_CE_Lyrical_type.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4a/Samudragupta_Circa_335-380_CE_Lyrical_type.jpg/764px-Samudragupta_Circa_335-380_CE_Lyrical_type.jpg</a></p>  |





Archer type coin of Samudra Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Samudra-4783-531.05.jpg>



Battle axe type coin of Samudra Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Samudra-4785-634.2.jpg>



Tiger slayer type of Samudra Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Samudra-4792tigerB-491.10.jpg>



Queen and king coin type of Samudra Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Samudra-4791.5-438.02.jpg>

### Gupta coins – Chandra Gupta II



8 gram gold coin of Chandra Gupta II with bow in the left hand. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c5/ChandraguptaIIOnHorse.jpg/440px-ChandraguptaIIOnHorse.jpg>



Obverse of the Chhatra and archer type coins of Chandra Gupta II. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9b/Two\\_Gold\\_coins\\_of\\_Chandragupta\\_II.jpg/720px-Two\\_Gold\\_coins\\_of\\_Chandragupta\\_II.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9b/Two_Gold_coins_of_Chandragupta_II.jpg/720px-Two_Gold_coins_of_Chandragupta_II.jpg)



Sceptre type coin of Chandra Gupta II. <https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4820stan-440.01.jpg>



Lion slayer type coin of Chandra Gupta II. <https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4814.2E-586.07.jpg>



Couch type coin of Chandra Gupta II. <https://coinindia.com/Chandra-Couch-R7.3-19.jpg>



Silver Drachma of Chandra Gupta II. <https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4823.1-108.05.jpg>



Srigupta kula Coin type of Chandra Gupta II with the legend *Sriguptakulāṅkārāsya Rājadhiraṇa Sri Chandragupta Vikramāṅkasya*. <https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4823.2-B1.001.jpg>



Copper coin of Chandra Gupta II. <https://coinindia.com/Chandragupta-4825.2-344.21.jpg>





Lead coin of Chandra Gupta II.  
<https://coinindia.com/Chandragupta-4828w-440.08.jpg>



Normal copper coin of Chandra Gupta II.  
<https://coinindia.com/Chandragupta-4826a-418.jpg>

### Gupta coins – Kumara Gupta I



Archer type coins of Kumara Gupta I.  
<https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4829v-625.13.jpg>



Horseman type coin of Kumara Gupta I.  
<https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4842.1Bv-344.31.jpg>



Lion slayer type coin of Kumara Gupta I.  
<https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4844lion-400.jpg>



Tiger slayer coin of Kumara Gupta I.  
<https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4844tiger-619.1.jpg>



Rhinoceros slayer coin of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumara-Rhino-R8.0-17.jpg>



Elephant rider coin of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4843ff-344.34.jpg>



Swordsman type coin of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4844swordsman-597.2.jpg>



Kartikeya coin of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4843A-591.01.jpg>



Apratigha coin of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4844-394.jpg>

This is the most enigmatic Gupta coin, as no one has yet successfully explained its significance. The obverse circular legend is still unread. But, most important, we do not know the identities of the two figures flanking the king. We know the central figure is the king, as his name is written in two lines on either side of him. But who are the other two, and what are they doing? Altekar has suggested that they may be the queen and crown prince, trying to persuade the king not to follow through on his decision of renunciation (as suggested by his wearing no jewelry and placing his hair in a top-knot). But their entreaties are not successful, as the king is *apratigha*, invincible. Thus, while Altekar suggests it is a coin commemorating the *end* of Kumaragupta's reign, Raven suggests it marks the *beginning* of the reign. <https://coinindia.com/galleries-kumaragupta.html>





Lyrist coin type of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumara-Lyrist-R8.0-20.jpg>



Silver drachma of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4854-MH02.36.jpg> (western type)



Madhyadesa type silver coin of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4859-619.8.jpg>



Lead coin of Kumara Gupta I. <https://coinindia.com/Kumaragupta-4864.11-439.03.jpg>

### Gupta coins – Puru Gupta



Gold dinar of Puru Gupta. (Chakra type) <https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4796C-570.jpg>



Gold dinar of Puru Gupta (Crescent moon type). <https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4807f13-586.06.jpg>



## Gupta coins – Skanda Gupta



Archer type coin of Skanda Gupta.  
<https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4865A-654.50.jpg>



King and Lakshmi type coin of Skanda Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4866-421.04.jpg>



Chhatra type coin of Skanda Gupta.  
<https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4866chhatra-591.08.jpg>



Garuda type silver coin of Skanda Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4879.1-419.84.jpg>



Bull type silver coin of Skanda Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4879.2-145.40.jpg>



Altar type silver coin of Skanda Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4870-130.47.jpg>



Madhyadesa type silver coin of Skanda Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4884v-599.6.jpg>



Lead coin of Skanda Gupta. <https://coinindia.com/Skandagupta-4884.2-456.24.jpg>

### Gupta coins – Kumara Gupta II



Gold coin of Kumara Gupta II. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/57/Kumaragupta\\_II\\_Kramaditya\\_Circa\\_530-540\\_CE.jpg/600px-Kumaragupta\\_II\\_Kramaditya\\_Circa\\_530-540\\_CE.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/57/Kumaragupta_II_Kramaditya_Circa_530-540_CE.jpg/600px-Kumaragupta_II_Kramaditya_Circa_530-540_CE.jpg)

### Gupta coins – Budha Gupta



Gold coin of Budha Gupta. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/16/Budhagupta\\_gold\\_coin\\_%2C\\_477-487\\_CE\\_%2C\\_India.jpg/440px-Budhagupta\\_gold\\_coin\\_%2C\\_477-487\\_CE\\_%2C\\_India.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/16/Budhagupta_gold_coin_%2C_477-487_CE_%2C_India.jpg/440px-Budhagupta_gold_coin_%2C_477-487_CE_%2C_India.jpg)

## Gupta coins – Narasimha Gupta



Gold coin of Narasimha Gupta. The name Nara is written under the left arm.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c2/Narasinhagupta\\_I\\_Circa\\_414-455\\_AD.jpg/600px-Narasinhagupta\\_I\\_Circa\\_414-455\\_AD.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c2/Narasinhagupta_I_Circa_414-455_AD.jpg/600px-Narasinhagupta_I_Circa_414-455_AD.jpg)

### Key Points

The Satavahanas were early issuers of Indian state coinage struck with images of their rulers. They formed a cultural bridge and played a vital role in trade and the transfer of ideas and culture to and from the Indo-Gangetic Plain to the southern tip of India. Animal motifs, Solar symbols, Moon, Sun, Chaitya, Ujjain symbol etc are seen on the Satavahana coins. The Andhra coins were found scattered over Maharashtra, Gujarat, Vidarbha, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Coromandal coast of Tamil Nadu.

Studying and understanding the coins unearthed from the regions bounded by seas on the east and west of the southern India, we can identify two prominent regions – the Tamiladesa (South) and the Dakshinapatha (Deccan). The Tamiladesa was divided into three independent states viz. Chera, Pandya and Chola whereas the Deccan was an integral part of the Mauryan empire.





Most Sangam period coins, excavated from various parts of Tamil Nadu, were made of copper. There are some silver coins, but gold coins have not been found so far. Some coins even had legends in ancient Tamil Brahmi embossed on them. The Cheras They issued uninscribed coinage with their heraldic symbol of bow-and-arrow which was employed both on the obverse as well as reverse of their coinage. The use of the elephant along with hills and serpentine symbols is said to recall the ecological system of the Chera country which was known for its elephants.

The Cholas initially were believed to have not issued any coinage in copper as they were not found in any excavations in and around their capital city of Uraiyur (Biddulph 1968). However, later excavations at Kaveripattinam yielded a square copper uninscribed Chola coin from their stratified layers. Besides many other coins are routinely found in and around Karur from the bed of the Amaravati river as surface finds and a few are also reported from the South Pennar river bed near Tirukkoilur.

The next prototype of Pandyan coins are copper coins with a variety of animal emblems some lone in front of posts (Vedic sacrifice posts?), some accompanied by prominent tortoise emblems depicting the riverine ecology around the Pandyan kingdom. However, the main identifying emblem on both series is the reverse stylised fish on all these coins.

The Gupta coins were mainly issued in gold. It is interesting to note that a contemporary poet has termed the phenomenon of issuing coins in gold as 'rain of gold'. The Gupta kings were seen standing on the gold coins apparently to be in the Kushana coins; The early coins of the Guptas had the standing king of the Kushana features but without the peaked cap. The king is seen wearing a Kushana long coat in the early coins which is replaced by an Indian *dhoti* later. Coat is also seen changed over time. Interestingly, in some coins the king is depicted bare bodied.

Like the motifs the inscriptions on the Gupta coins are unique. The inscriptions that encircle the motif are in the form of verses celebrating the king's glory on the earth and the bliss future in heaven through his merits. The coins of Samudra Gupta have six legends, Chandra Gupta II have ten different legends whereas the coins of Kumara Gupta offer no less than twenty – four legends.



*Do you know?***Sangam Age**

According to the Sangam poems the First Sangam age was based in the city of south Madurai and the Second Sangam age was based in the city of the Kapatapuram but these two cities were believed to be destroyed by the floods and rain and the latter Sangam age was based in the city of Present day Madurai city in Tamil Nadu. (The Coromandel Coast of the South India is susceptible to Tsunami waves.

The corpus of Sangam literature includes Tolkappiyam, Ettutogai, Pattuppattu, Pathinenkilkanakku, and the two epics – Silappathigaram and Manimegalai. Tolkappiyam authored by Tolkappiyar is the earliest of the Tamil literature. It is a work on Tamil grammar but it provides information on the political and socioeconomic conditions of the Sangam period. The Ettutogai or Eight Anthologies consist of eight works – Aingurunooru, Narrinai, Aganaooru, Purananooru, Kuruntogai, Kalittogai, Paripadal and Padirrupattu. The Pattuppattu or Ten Idylls consist of ten works – Thirumurugarrupadai, Porunararrupadai,

Sirupanarrupadai, Perumpanarrupadai, Mullaippattu, Nedunalvadai, Maduraikkanji, Kurinjippattu, Pattinappalai and Malaipadukadam. Both Ettutogai and Pattuppattu were divided into two main groups – Aham (love) and Puram (valor).

Pathinenkilkanakku contains eighteen works mostly dealing with ethics and morals. The most important among them is Tirukkural authored by Thiruvalluvar. Silappathigaram written by Elango Adigal and Manimegalai by Sittalai Sattanar also provides valuable information on the Sangam polity and society.

In addition to the Sangam literature, the Greek authors like Megasthenes, Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy mention the commercial contacts between the West and South India. The Asokan inscriptions mention the Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers on the south of the Mauryan empire. The Hathikumbha inscription of Kharavela of Kalinga also mentions about Tamil kingdoms. The excavations at Arikamedu, Poompuhar, Kodumanal and other places reveal the overseas commercial activities of the Tamils.

**The Sangam literature or heroic poetry refers to the concept of 'Aithinai' or five eco-zones and these five eco-zones are:**

- (a) Kurunji or hilly backwoods,
- (b) Palai or arid zone,
- (c) Mullai or pastoral tracts,
- (d) Maruttam or wetland, and
- (e) Neital the sea coast.

The occupations and lifestyle the people of these eco-zones is varied. Hunting and gathering was the occupation of Kurunji inhabitants. The people living in Palai depended on plundering and cattle-lifting. Shifting cultivation and animal husbandry were the occupation of the people of the Mullai zone. The people of Marutam pursued plough agriculture, and fishing and salt-making were the occupations of the people of Neital eco- zones. We also notice bartering of goods produced by one eco-zone people with other eco-zone inhabitants. Gradually, these small social groups living in different eco-zones became integrated through interaction and interdependence.

The Tamils of the Sangam age had trading contacts with the Mediterranean world (Greece and Rome), Egypt, China, Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka. The literary works like Silappadikaram, Manimekalai and Pattinappalai frequently refer to the contact with the Greek and Roman traders. This period marked the height of the Indo-Roman trade. The Periplus of Erythrean Sea and other accounts of foreigners such as those of Pliny, Ptolemy, Strabo and Petronius mention various ports and the articles traded during the period. The archaeological excavations and explorations at various sites have also yielded the artefacts confirming to the trading relations between the Tamil regions and other countries. The discovery of coin hoards at many places also attests this fact.

The Sangam texts mention prominently only the ports of Musiri, Puhar (Kaveripattinam) and Korkai, the three great ports of the three great rulers of the times. However, the Periplus refers to the ports of Tondi, Musiri and Comari (Cape Comorin / Kanyakumari), Colchi (Korkai), Poduke (Arikamedu) and Sopatma. According to Periplus there were three types of vessels in use in South India. These included small coasting vessels, large coasting vessels and ocean-going ships. There is also the mention of large vessels called Colandia sailing from the Tamil Coast to the Ganges.

The commodities exported to Rome fetched high returns. Living animals like tiger, leopard, monkeys and peacocks were exported to Rome. The chief animal products of export included ivory and pearl. Plant products like aromatics and spices (pepper, ginger, cardamom, cloves, nutmegs, etc.), coconut, plantain, jaggery, teak wood, sandal wood, cotton cloth of special variety called argaru (from Uraiyur) were also among the chief exports. Mineral products like diamonds, beryl, steel, semiprecious stones, etc. were also exported from South India. (<https://ancient-indian-coins.blogspot.com/2018/07/sangam-period-coinage-300-bc-200-ad.html>)

### Chapter Check-up

1. Write a note on the Satavahana Coinage.
2. Discuss about the Sangam Age Chera, Chola and Pandyan coinage.
3. Divinity in profile is only known from the Gupta coinage. Discuss.

### Short Answers

1. Coins of Samudra Gupta.
2. Coins of post Sangam age.
3. Symbols on the Satavahana coins.

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## UNIT - IV

### Medieval South Indian Coins

#### Structure

Learning Objectives

4.1: Medieval South Indian Coins

4.2: Coins of Pallavas

4.3: Coins of Imperial Cholas

4.4: Coins of Cheras

4.5: Imperial Pandyas

#### Key Points

Do you know?

Chapter Check-up

Glossary

#### Learning Objectives

*After going through this unit you should be able to*

- Know and understand the historical importance of Medieval South Indian coins.
- Trace the distinguishing features of Pallava coins in South India.
- Discuss about the Imperial Chola, Chera and Pandyan Coinage.

#### 4.1: Medieval South Indian Coins

The Numismatic history of South India during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE to about the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE is uncertain. Discovery of very less number of the coins from this period and the picture emerging from this numismatic data is not so encouraging. The legends that are found on the coins belonging to this period had various *raja lanchhanas* but unfortunately they could not be attributed to any particular dynasty. Sometimes, the legends found on the coins are similar to the ones found in the other coins also. The lion, bull and the elephant motifs are seen all along the Tamiladesa. Inscriptions on these coins are a rare phenomenon and they are short wherever they appear resulting in understanding only half of the name of the ruler or a

particular deity. Thus the numismatists have to depend on the find spots and the area which is attributed to a particular dynasty.

The revival of the technique in manufacturing the silver and punch marked coins was reintroduced in South India by the Kadambas who inhabited the Kannada regions. Towards the end of the tenth century and beginning of the eleventh century, the gold coins were stamped with a punch bearing the *lanchhana* in the centre of the coin. The coins were so deeply punched that they resemble the shape of a concave. Around this symbol in the centre there certain symbols or legends punched separately. These punch marked coins in South India were also called as the *Padma tanka* coins as the central part of the coins had a lotus or *Padma* in many coins.

The **early Kadamba coins** in gold have a large lotus struck on one side and six small punches on the other side. These coins interestingly have a queer combination of the die striking and punch marking techniques. Of the six symbols on the reverse side, four are large with flower in them while the other two are small and blank. The coins of other dynasties of this period have punches only on one side. The other side of the coin remains blank. The Cholas, Eastern and Western Chalukyas, the Yadavas of Devagiri and few other rulers issued such coins.

#### **With legend Sri Dosharasi:**

The coins of Krishnavarma II sported the title of Sri Dosharasi, where dosha could probably be attributed to moon and darkness. Coins with mint epithet Sasamka are also found.

#### **With legend Sri Manarasi:**

Since the legend “Sri Manarasi” is not encountered in any inscription, their attribution could be imprecise. However, the following things need to be considered before making a tentative attribution:

1. Coins with the legend Sri Manarasi show the influence of Pallavas, some of the Pallava coinage do have similar attributes such as the conch and chakra
2. As already stated, the Tripuravata branch of rulers seems to have the blessings of Pallava kings

3. Krishnavarma II minted coins with the legend Sri Dosharasi and Dosharasi. There is a similarity in the obverse of these coins and coins with the legend Sri Manarasi
4. Amongst the inscribed coins of Kadambas of Banavasi, 70% of the inscribed coins had the legend Sri Manarasi, thus indicating that the coins were minted over a long period <https://www.mintageworld.com/blog/coins-kadambas-banavasi/>



Coin of the Kadambas of Goa. <https://coinindia.com/GoaK-653.237v-Jayakesin-313.7.jpg>



Hanuman on the Kadamba coins. <https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/hanuman-on-kadamba-coin.jpg>

On the **Eastern Chalukya coins**, the coins issued by Raja Raja I had the royal symbol of a boar facing left. It is seen flanked by a lamp stamp on both side and an *ankusa*, a *chhatra*, and two *chauries* flanked in the centre. Towards the end of the margin the inscription *Sri Raja Raja* followed by the letter *sa*. which may be standing for a *samvat* and a number in Kannada script. It is interesting to note that each letter is punched separately. These coins are not only found in the Chalukyan territories of India but also on the islands of Rumri and Cheduba of Burma. Sakti Varman, the early ruler of the Eastern Chalukyan dynasty probably had issued such coins. Some coins of this period bear the inscriptions *Sri Chalanarayana* or *Sri Chakhurayana*. another significant feature of these coins is that the coins that earlier have the boar symbol punched in the centre are replaced with that of a tiger and a standing *chauri* bearer in the centre. The boar emblem of the first type coins belong to the Chalukya dynasty but the legend on it reads the title Raja Raja I of the Chola dynasty. Similarly, the tiger emblem of the Chola dynasty is seen on the Chalukya Saktivarman I coin. These two types of coins show the interchanging of the emblems and inscriptions which further represent the mutual relations of the Chola and Chalukya dynasties. The coins of Raja Raja I had the title *Sri Chulanarayana* when Vengi was a protectorate of the Chola empire. The coins having the Chola emblem and the Chalukya legend *Sri Chalkhurayana* were issued by Chalukya Saktivarman as a token of Gratitude to the Cholas.

Among the **Western Chalukyas**, Jayasimha II, Somesvara I and Vikramaditya VI had issued Punch marked coins in gold (*padma tankas*). The coins of Jayasimha II show a large temple with a domed tower as the central punch along with a chakra in the middle and his title surrounding the symbol; a punch is used for each letter. He issued coins with five lions and the title separately. His successor also issued coins with five punches 103 where as Somesvara II issued coins with nine punches. Five of them are lotuses, two bearing the Kannada letter *Sri*, the eighth punch has a Sun and Moon and the last punch has his name. Vikramaditya VI, the next ruler issued coins of similar type with a legend *bhuja* in the punch. The usurper of the Chalukyan throne, Bijjala Tribhuvanamalla also issued coins with nine punches with the legend *Kalachure* as the ninth punch.

Many other coins of this period have nine punches the central punch being a boar, tiger, Hanuman, lion etc. The coins that have nine punches with a central punch bearing Hanuman and four punches of lion and two Kannada conventional letters *Sri* in Kannada and two punches bear the legend *suga along* with *ankusa* are said to be issued by the **Kadambas**. Some coins have only six punches with no legend at all. The central punch on them sometimes is a boar, two have *Sri* the fourth punch is a lotus and the fifth and sixth punches being *Sankha* and bow. Another series have five punches having the elephant in the centre, two punches bear the legend *sri* and the remaining two legends have the Telugu legend *Bavana* and *Gadava*. A few coins have only four punches two of them bear *sri* one has a symbol like a temple and the last has the legend *Rayana*. These coins are not attributed to any king or any dynasty so far.

The **Yadavas of Devagiri** also issued ouch marked coins in gold. They were known as *achchus*. Bhillam V, the first ruler of the dynasty issued coins with nine punches; five of them bear the lions, two have the legend *sri*, the eighth punch has a *sankha* and the ninth bears the legend *Bhiallamadeva* in Nagari. Singhana issued coins with six punches with dancing Krishna as the central figure. The second and third punches are *sri*, fourth punch has a lotus, fifth punch bears a *sankha* and the sixth is a legend bearing *Sri Singhana* in Nagari characters. Later, he issued the coins with five punches only replacing the central figure of Krishna with a lotus. His successors Krishna, Mahadeva, Amana and Ramachandra also followed the same coin types. A coin found with the Garuda in the central punch with a legend *Ramacha* in Nagari may be attributed to Ramachandra of this dynasty. Some gold coins from Satara district have three punches. Of which, two



bear a Kannada legend stamped on the two arms, and the third punch is either a lion or an elephant. The Kannada legend is unintelligible. These coins are attributed to the Chalukyan dynasty. During this period, few die struck coins were also produced in this region of the country.

The earliest die struck coins are believed to be issued by the **Nolambas**, who are said to be the descendents of the Pallavas. Their coins are only a few bearing a seated Nandi (bull) facing to the right and a *sankha* above its back. A four lined Kannada inscription which reads *Sri Sri Immadi Nolamba Narayana* is seen on the other side. The Kadambas of Goa also issued die struck coins. Jayakesi I issued two types of coins one Gaja – Sardula type (elephant and lion) and the other is a lion facing right. Both these coins have a common reverse with a *trisula* and the Nagari inscription *Sri Malaigai Bhairava*. The next ruler issued coins with a legend *Sri Malaharamari* on the reverse. He also issued another gold coin with a maned lion and the cyclic year name on the obverse and a long Nagari legend reading *Sri Saptakotisa labdhavira* followed by his name and ends with his title *Melaharamari*. Similar coins were issued by Sivachitta and Hemmadideva.

Vishnu Vardhana and Narasimha, **the Hoyasala kings** also issued die struck coins. Vishnuvardhana issued two types of coins. One coin bears a lion in the obverse and the title *Sri Talakadagonda* on the reverse. The other type reads the legend *Sri Nanambavadigonda* with a lion riding Chamunda. Narasimha also issued this kind of coins with the inscription *Pratapa Narasimha*. On some coins of this region, a bare headed figure is seen with a long sword on the obverse. The reverse has a Kannada legend *Nigalam kamala danda nagova*. They are attributed to the king Barma BHupala who ruled Bijapur, Belgam and Dharwad regions in the 12<sup>th</sup> century CE. The figure of Virabhadra and the Nagari legend *vairimartanda* are found on some other coins but not ascertained to any particular ruler.

Some uninscribed gold coins having a trident without a handle, sun and the moon in the intervening space between the fork on the obverse and a garuda on the reverse. These coins are attributed to **the Silaharas of Kolhapur**. An elephant on the obverse and a double storeyed temple on the reverse are seen on some other coins which are unattributable. Another type of uninscribed coin found in the southern region has a large elephant on one side and a floral scroll on the other. They are called as *gajapati pagodas* in the Mysore region.

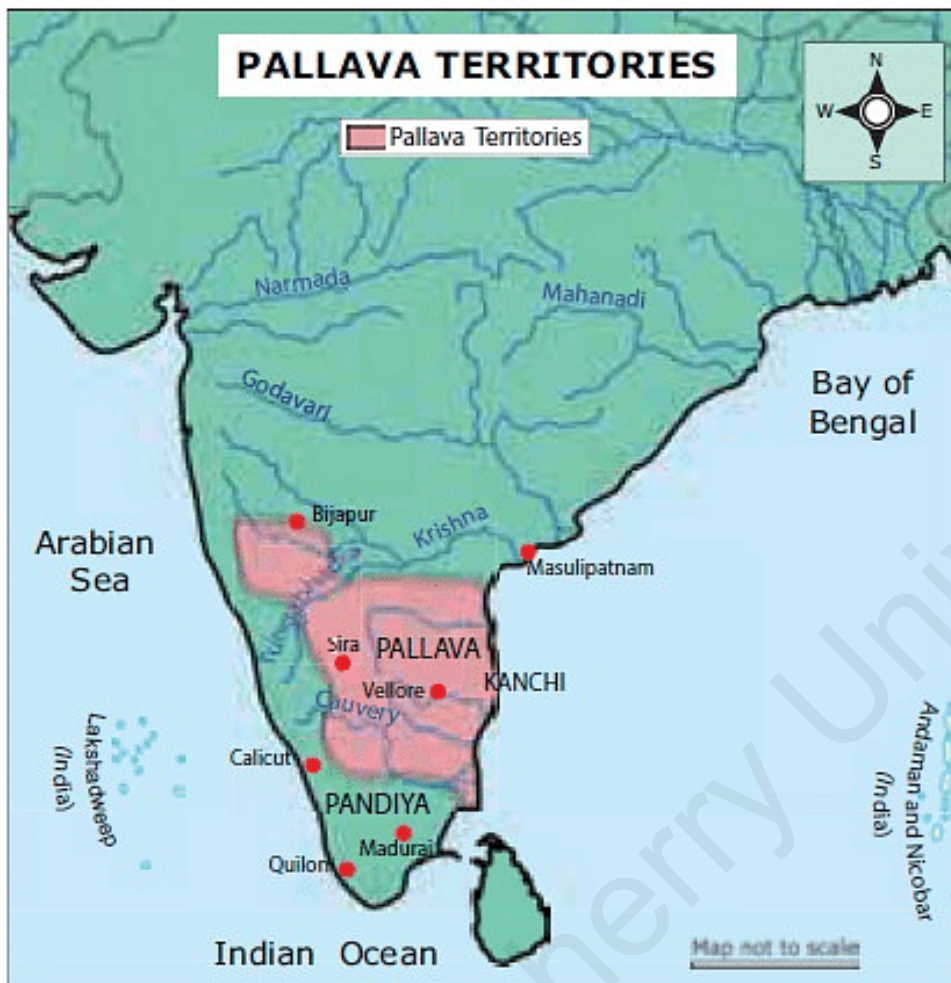
Some gold coins of the Harsha, the **Kashmir king** are similar to these Gajapati pagodas. The Kalhana's Rajatarangini mentions that these coins were imitated from the *Karnata desa*. This suggests that these coins were issued by the **Gangas**. According to scholars these coins belong to the Vijayanagara king Mallikarjuna. Some tiny thin gold coins with a bull on the obverse and Telugu regnal dates in the reverse are found in Orissa. They are attributed to the Ganga kings who ruled parts of Kalinga during the 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> Century C.E.

#### 4.2: Coins of Pallavas

The **Pallava dynasty** existed from 275 CE to 897 CE, ruling a significant portion of the Deccan, also known as Tondaimandalam. The Pallavas played a crucial role in shaping the Southern Indian history and heritage during their rule. The dynasty rose to prominence after the downfall of the Satavahana dynasty, whom they had formerly served as feudatories.

The Pallavas became a major Southern Indian power during the reign of Mahendravarman I (600–630 CE) and Narasimhavarman I (630–668 CE), and dominated the southern Telugu region and the northern parts of the Tamil region for about 600 years, until the end of the 9th century. Throughout their reign, they remained in constant conflict with both the Chalukyas of Badami in the north, and the Tamil kingdoms of Chola and Pandyas in the south. The Pallavas were finally defeated by the Chola ruler Aditya I in the 9th century CE.

The Pallavas are most noted for their patronage of Hindu Vaishnava temple architecture, the finest example being the Shore Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Mamallapuram. Kancheepuram served as the capital of the Pallava kingdom. The dynasty left behind magnificent sculptures and temples, and is recognized to have established the foundations of medieval South Indian architecture, which some scholars believe the ancient Hindu treatise Manasara inspired. They developed the Pallava script, from which Grantha ultimately took form. This script eventually gave rise to several other Southeast Asian scripts such as Khmer. The Chinese traveller Xuanzang visited Kanchipuram during Pallava rule and extolled their benign rule. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pallava\\_dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pallava_dynasty))



<https://static.prepp.in/public/image/7088c493bacbf69ddd1a709fef8d028c.png?tr=w-419,h-430,c-force>

### Pallava coinage

The early Pallava Coinage was an uninscribed set of coins in lead with the image of a Bull on the obverse first identified by Walter Elliot in the nineteenth century. This was confirmed by later authors on the basis of the presence of a *Vrishabha Lanchana* or Bull emblem on Pallava copper plate seals as well as the elaborate bull statues at the Shore temple at Mamallapuram built by the Pallava ruler, Narasimhavarman II (r. 720-728 C.E.). R. Krishnamurthi's book *Pallava Coins* describes and illustrates many lead coins in this 'Bull' series with a standard Bull standing facing right on the obverse with a vessel and a sprouting plant. Another sub-series in the Lead Bull series is a set of coins with a ship with a single mast on the reverse probably inspired by the Satavahana and Salankhayana coin type preceding this series in the Andhra region.

The next transition in Pallava Coinage is the change of metal to copper and the new set of coins have the same Bull to the right without inscriptions with reverse image of vessels followed by the sprouting tree and ship (though now a double-masted ship). A later series shows the Bull surmounted by Srivatsa emblem. In yet later coins, the Srivatsa is replaced by a star or a crescent, or multiple emblems including a conch or snake. A later development in the series is the reverse emblem of a Chakra with multiple rays with or without a circle binding them. In some other coins, the Chakra is replaced with a large Srivatsa or even Swastika within a circle and yet later by a Conch shell showing the co-existence of both Shaivite and Vaishnavite emblems on the Pallava coinage.

A sub-series also shows a reverse flag with a triangular shape with four ribbons which is similar to coins found in Sri Lanka and Thailand during this period. Another transition in the series is a set of coins with the obverse image of a rampant lion with or without a raised forepaw similar to Vishnukundin coins of Andhra Pradesh. However, the series is differentiated from Vishnukundin coinage by the presence of typical Pallava reverses like Swastika or Conch-shell. The Pallava Lion series also shows the lion facing left at times as opposed to Vishnukundin coins which only show right facing lion. The Lion series is tentatively attributed to Simhavarman II (r. 438-477 C.E.) by Krishnamurthi.

A later series of Pallava coins also show inscriptions in Pallava Grantha script with legends like Vampu, Lakshita, Pakapituku, Udati/Udduti, Lalitankurah, Mahamegha, etc. many of which are the epithets of Pallava king Mahendravarman I according to epigraphic 7 sources. The reverses of these coins show many emblems which are new like one with a boar emblem probably showcasing the Pallavas' victory under Mahendravarman I over the Chalukyas of Badami under Pulakeshin II. Krishnamurthi illustrates few more bronze coins with the typical Bull and legends like Sribhara and Srinidhi which he attributes to Narsimhavarman I who had them as epithets. He also attributes a copper coin with a Lion facing left with a trisula, boar and fish and reverse Chakra emblem of the previous Pallava coins. Though uninscribed, Krishnamurthi suggests that the coin represents Pallava (Lion) domination over the Chalukyas (Boar) and Pandyas (Fish) in the aftermath of Narsimhavarman I's victory over Pulakeshin II who it is said "wrote the syllables of victory" on Pulakeshin's back in the close encounter between the two in which the latter was killed. ([https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp\\_content/S000829IC/](https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000829IC/))



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### Symbols and legends:

R. Krishna Murthy made an elaborate study on the Pallava coins and points out the Andhra dynastic tradition, which is strong in Pallava coinage, in the use of symbols like the bull and lion and Telugu titles as legends. The lion and bull are often combined with other symbols like the svastika, srivatsa, the sacred lamp, kumbha, chakra, trisula, and the ship and horse. Symbols like the bull also occur on the early Pallava copper plate seals. The die-struck technique is common to most of these dynasties. The Pallavas issued coins in lead and copper (high-tin bronze), lead for being soft, ductile and cheaper and high-tin bronze for its gold-like appearance. Silver seems to have been hardly used, although some have been reported from Sri Lanka.

### Metal analysis:

|   |  |
|---|--|
|  <p>Circular Pallava coin. <a href="https://3.bp.blogspot.com/-IR40WPu7d-U/VsyFsp0qATI/AAAAAAAAARKc/X7uDsYe2BBI/s400/PallavaBull.jpg">https://3.bp.blogspot.com/-IR40WPu7d-U/VsyFsp0qATI/AAAAAAAAARKc/X7uDsYe2BBI/s400/PallavaBull.jpg</a></p>   |  <p>Potin coin of the Kanchipuram Pallavas. With a legend <i>pakapituku</i>. <a href="https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/pallavas-of-kanchi-potin-coin.jpg">https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/pallavas-of-kanchi-potin-coin.jpg</a></p> |
|  <p>Small silver coin of Narasimhavarman I with its paw raised as in the Srilankan flag. <a href="https://1.bp.blogspot.com/_It294ZTUfIk/SvCsJDAOVsI/AAAAAAAAABA/I6rv7lBM4mg/s320/pallava1.jpg">https://1.bp.blogspot.com/_It294ZTUfIk/SvCsJDAOVsI/AAAAAAAAABA/I6rv7lBM4mg/s320/pallava1.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Bronze unit of Kanchi Pallavas with bull in the centre. <a href="https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/2030/2030004113.jpg">https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/2030/2030004113.jpg</a></p>  |



Pallava coin depicting boats with masts. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318740957/figure/fig8/AS:631648886468639@1527608238819/Pallava-coin-depicting-ship-with-masts.png>



Pallava Potin coin with a Bull on the obverse and swastika on the reverse. <https://i.pinimg.com/564x/a0/8e/a9/a08ea95ae3296d258d0701822c5c0b24.jpg>



Pallava coin with a bull and the legend *pakapitu* in the obverse and a *sankha* in the reverse. <https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/pallavas-of-kanchipuram.jpg>



Very rare Potin coin of Kanchi Pallavas. <https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/l/2017/2017003713.jpg>



Potin coin of Narasimhavarman I. <https://www.cngcoins.com/photos/big/2080169.jpg>



Coin of Mahendravarman with a Tamil title *vampu*. [https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-kB\\_k1jTHwZQ/UA2pcbT3r0I/AAAAAAAAAC-w/w1\\_LJRaDQTc/s1600/n2.jpg](https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-kB_k1jTHwZQ/UA2pcbT3r0I/AAAAAAAAAC-w/w1_LJRaDQTc/s1600/n2.jpg)

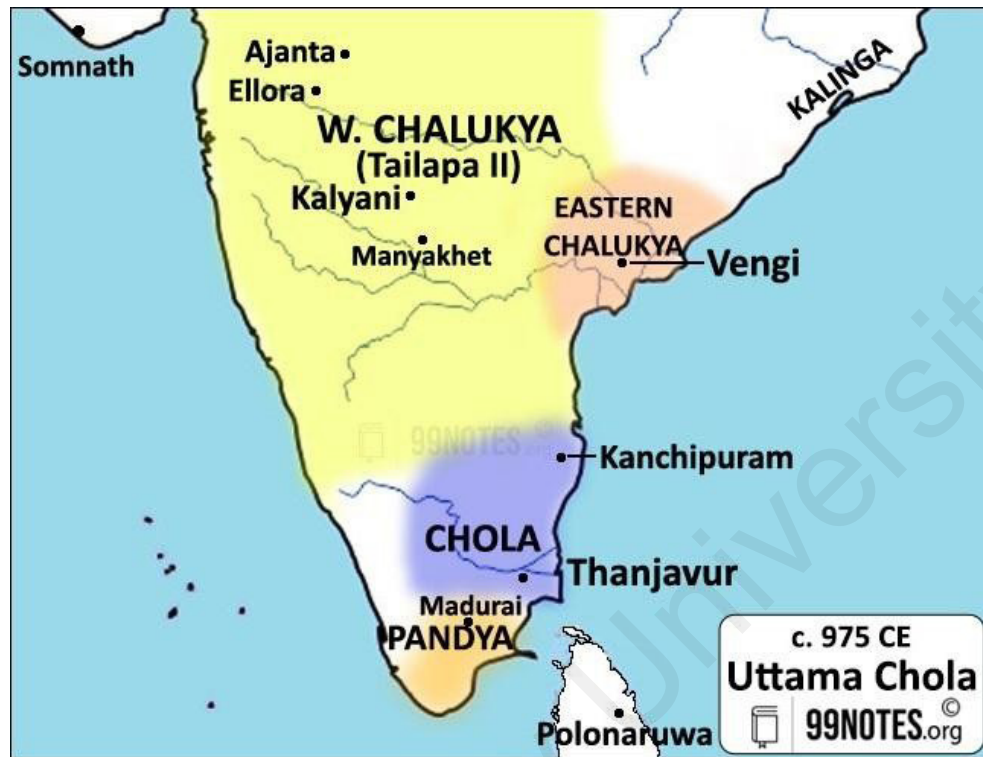


### 4.3: Coins of Imperial Cholas

The Cholas were one of the dynasties that established a kingdom in South. Their kingdom consisted the Kaveri delta and other territories. The early Cholas had their mention in the edicts of Asoka and the accounts of the western writers as well as in the Tamil literature. Karikala is the most significant ruler among the early chola rulers. He extended his kingdom to the Pandya and Chera territories by defeating the rulers. He established the Cholamanadalam by defeating the rulers. It included Trichinopoly, Tanjaore and parts of Mysore and Madras.

Till about the 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. Cholas led an obscure political life. During the reign of Vijayalaya the dynasty rose to power who was a feudatory of the Pallavas. He made himself the master of Tanjavur when the Pandyas tried to suppress the Pallava territories. His son Aditya I received certain Pallava territories for helping them with their conflict with the Pandyas. Later, he freed himself from the Pallava domination and consolidated his position in the newly acquired Pallava territories. He defeated the Pandyan ruler and conquered the Kongu country. Soon he made the Ganga kings also to surrender to his sword.



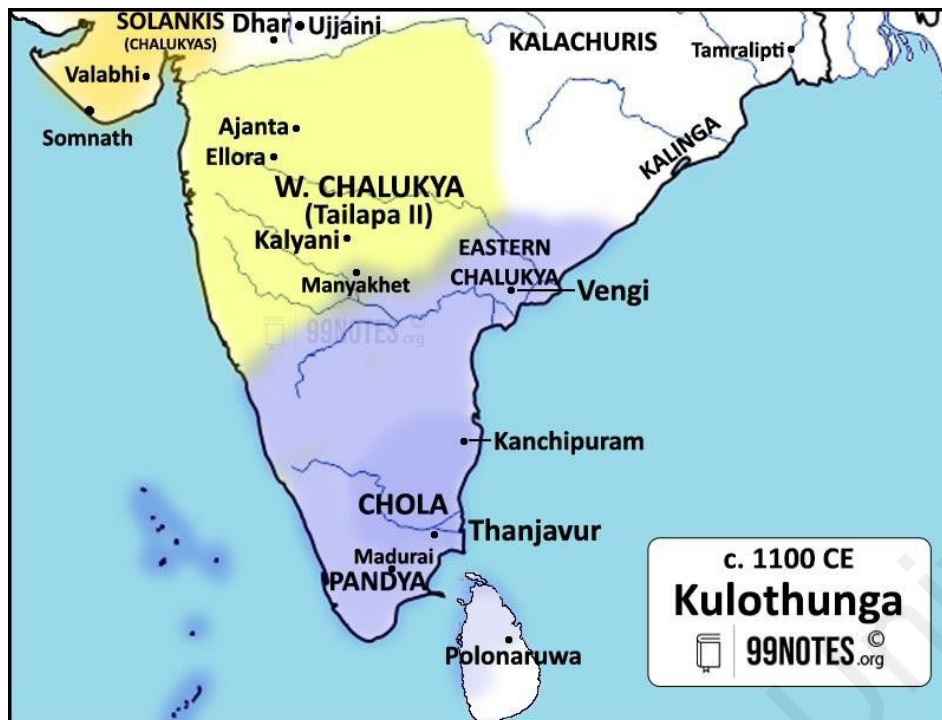


Chola territories during the reign of Uttama Chola. [https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/ACNNII7RUdoADMIEkbf1fiJsb8ncyjQjmAAqunnjHSX1gfZ1YkqKjyKGPh0vy5191SZlfruiZcDB2ro4BykaJbf7rAMitc-l68FqCGrpJ6tHqxBTTYlBwFTi5sogpYJQGSr9sGt1QaksJ0grOeVO0hilI69s8FY5r\\_xiWdX037E6MOSq2EIR5fcOTsbtwSvuQXkM1uTBBrQ](https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/ACNNII7RUdoADMIEkbf1fiJsb8ncyjQjmAAqunnjHSX1gfZ1YkqKjyKGPh0vy5191SZlfruiZcDB2ro4BykaJbf7rAMitc-l68FqCGrpJ6tHqxBTTYlBwFTi5sogpYJQGSr9sGt1QaksJ0grOeVO0hilI69s8FY5r_xiWdX037E6MOSq2EIR5fcOTsbtwSvuQXkM1uTBBrQ)

Parantaka I, who succeeded Aditya I also defeated the Pandyas and his ally (the Ceylonese ruler) and conquered their kingdom. Under his rule the Chola kingdom extended from Pennar to Cape Comorin. The Chola power is set back when the Rashtrakuta king Krishna III defeated the Chola ruler and annexed a large part of the Chola dominion. During this period, they encouraged the other Pandya rulers to become independent and regained the Chola territories that were lost to the Rashtrakutas. Rajaraja was the next ruler and expanded the Chola territories towards Kerala. He also sent a naval expedition to Ceylon and captured few parts of it. he occupied Kalinga, Coorg and Maldives.

Rajendra Chola I, like his father Rajaraja I added some territories to the throne. He sent a large expedition to the Ganga valley which fetched him the title *Gangaikondan*. "Rajendra had the proud satisfaction of seeing his banner floating from the bank of the Ganga to the island of Ceylon, and across the Bay of Bengal over Java, Sumatra and Malaya peninsula. Rajadhiraja, Rajendra II, Virarajendra and Kulottunga I were the other kings who ruled the Chola empire till the middle of 12<sup>th</sup> century.





Chola territories extension during the Kulottunga Chola's reign.

[https://lh4.googleusercontent.com/nv2eK95ZNUS9py5zJ7P7eoPHATnD8Hr6rvX0oYRfleOC04yTOuJlCx99qOMux2IAimOK0obwExDowi\\_KPWOPtfxVKXjr2sGMIFaNSU1Po8Tc\\_1JcwV7E2PNy-ATvgHH98S7r\\_aI9qYvWKvn2lXu0Dw94eYNsXMxO8z2WY6dtphJsONbamdRWKspywtjvu1l9fgSUxYl65w](https://lh4.googleusercontent.com/nv2eK95ZNUS9py5zJ7P7eoPHATnD8Hr6rvX0oYRfleOC04yTOuJlCx99qOMux2IAimOK0obwExDowi_KPWOPtfxVKXjr2sGMIFaNSU1Po8Tc_1JcwV7E2PNy-ATvgHH98S7r_aI9qYvWKvn2lXu0Dw94eYNsXMxO8z2WY6dtphJsONbamdRWKspywtjvu1l9fgSUxYl65w)

### Chola Coinage:

South India evolved with its own gold measurements and standards based on the indigenous seeds. The Kalanju and Manjadi seeds were used for making the gold coins as these coins were the largest. The *ratti* coins were used to measure as the gold standards in North India. South India developed a gold based currency with gold coins as the major form of currency in the region. The coins made with the kalanju seed weight are termed as *pon/ han or Achchu, Mada/ Madai*, etc. According to Tamil inscriptions, the gold coins of the Chola kingdom weighed around 52 grains of Kalanju. The other seeds such as Manjadi were used for lower standard weights and the coin made in the lower standards weighed 4.5 – 5 seeds/grains. That is on tenth of the coin weight of Kalanju seeds gold coin. The inscriptions of the Chola period give the names of different coins that are under circulation. The coins such as Rajarajan Madai, Rajendran madai and the Madurantakan Madai suggest that the coins were named after the rulers or their titles.

### Uttama Chola coin

The earliest coin belonging to the Chola rulers can be attributed to Uttama Chola. The gold Uttama Chola coin is lost but Elliot preserved its illustration. He mentioned “the gold coin No. 151 lost; facsimile in wood cut; weight 50 to 60 grains; obverse and reverse are exactly same; a tiger seated to the left; opposite is a fish etc; the legend on it reads ‘Uttama Chola’ in Grantha characters.” This coin along with the silver issues of Uttama Chola bears a legend *Matirantakan*, a title of Uttama Chola.



Uttama Chola coin with a legend *Uttama*. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/08/Chola\\_coin\\_with\\_legend\\_%22Uttama%22.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/08/Chola_coin_with_legend_%22Uttama%22.png)

Uttama Chola issued coins in silver and copper too. On one side a seated tiger, two fish and a bow are seen on a pedestal. Above the emblem of the Cholas, two Chawris and a parasol are shown. The legend on the reverse reads ‘*Uttama Chola*’ in Nagari characters.

### Rajaraja I coins

Rajaraja issued the coins with a lion flanked by fish and bow type in gold and silver. He innovated 8 new coins with the king in standing posture and the reverse has a seated king. This coin type is known as the Ceylon man coin as it was copied by the Pandyas and the Ceylon rulers in the medieval period. This coin was majorly issued in copper and many households had a hoard or coin repository in almost all the old houses of Tamilnadu. The coin has a unique fabric and was imitated by the Pandyan rulers also. Rajaraja’s coins are best known to the numismatists of South India. He issued his coins that has bow – tiger – fish on the both sides and legend reading *Rajaraja* in Nagari characters. Several thousands of coins are minted during his reign and this suggests the economic prosperity of South India under the Tamil rule. Both these coin types are found in gold, silver and copper. The coins that have standing or seated king resembles the accomplishments of the king as the Kushanas.

Many scholars opined that inscribing the king's posture on the coin is observed from the Roman coins which were abundant in the Southern territories. Interestingly, the objects found in the king's hands are also similar to the flowers as in the Kushana coins.

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  <p>Gold coin Kahavanu of Rajaraja I.<br/> <a href="https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/1013/1013018813.jpg">https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/1013/1013018813.jpg</a></p>          |  <p>Coin of Rajaraja I, the octopus type.<br/> <a href="https://coinquest.com/cq_data/cq_ro/coins_380/medieval_raja_chola.jpg">https://coinquest.com/cq_data/cq_ro/coins_380/medieval_raja_chola.jpg</a></p>   |
|  <p>Silver half kahavanu of Rajaraja I.<br/> <a href="https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/2026/2026008923.jpg">https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/2026/2026008923.jpg</a></p>       |  <p>Copper Massa of Rajaraja I. <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/chola_dynasty/21-200.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/chola_dynasty/21-200.jpg</a> <a href="https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/chola_dynasty/22-200.jpg">https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/chola_dynasty/22-200.jpg</a></p> |
|  <p>Debased Gold 1/8 Kahavanu coin of Rajaraja I. <a href="https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/2032/2032003813.jpg">https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/2032/2032003813.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Gold coin of Rajaraja I with <b>bow – tiger</b> – <b>two – fish</b> on the obverse reading the legend Yuddha Malla in the reverse<br/> <a href="https://media.numisbids.com/sales/hosted/marudhar/034/image00078.jpg">https://media.numisbids.com/sales/hosted/marudhar/034/image00078.jpg</a></p>                             |

### Special issues of Rajaraja I

Rajaraja I issued of three special type coins. All the three types have the same figure; a seated tiger and a legend under its left arm. The legend is inscribed in Nagari characters reading ‘Sri Rajaraja.’ On the obverse of these coins a standing figure with a seated tiger under his arm. Another type has a fish under the left arm. The third variety shows a standing figure along with the Foot (*pada*). In some coins bow is also added next to the *pada*. All these coins bearing the title Rajaraja suggest that they were issued by Rajaraja I. He issued coins in gold, silver, copper with these symbols inscribed on them for their circulation in different territories. The coins that have the standing figure and a fish were for circulation in the acquired Pandyan territories. The coin with tiger is circulated in the chola country where as the coin with the *pada* is for the Kerala country (Tiruvadi country). Rajaraja changed the name of each country; he changed the following names;

- Tondaimandalam to Jayamkonda Cholamandalam
- Pandyan country to Rajaraja Pandimandalam etc.

T. Desikachari who worked extensively on the Chola coins reports a silver coin with a human figure in seated posture. This coin has a rare “bow – tiger – two – fish” emblem under the royal umbrella and a *chauri* below which a Nagari legend is seen reading ‘Rajaraja I.’ He also issued the Muralidhara & the horse rider coin varieties. The obverse of these two coins is also similar with a seated tiger under which the Nagari legend Sri Rajaraja is shown but the reverse of this coin has the Muralidhara Krishna figure. Another coin is seen with a rider on the galloping horse. The muralidhara coin is too significant that it is the only coin that is religious in nature. Rajaraja is an ardent follower of Saivism and the three religions viz, Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism received equal patronage from this great ruler.

From the inscriptions of the Cholas we can find some terms denoting the currency circulated in gold, silver and copper. Following are a few of such terms;

- *Pon*
- *Kasu*
- *Kalanju*
- *Manjadi*



- *Madai*
- *Kasu*
- *kunri*
- *Kani* etc.

From the above references from the epigraphs one can understand that the coins were used as the minted ones such as pon, mada, kasu etc. and the weighting standards of Kalanju, Manjadi etc. stand for the gold in grams. There are three denominations of coins ranged between 60 to 70 grams, 7 grams and 1.7 grams. As seen in the pictures, the Kahavanu, ½ kahavanu and 1/8 kahavanu etc suggests that the coins were minted in higher to the lesser denominations also.

### **Coins of Rajendra Chola I and Kulottunga Chola**

Rajaraja Chola's successor, Rajendra Chola I (r. 1012-1044 C.E.) issued coins with his name or the title *Gangaikonda Chola* (meaning the Chola who conquered Ganga) which is his epithet in many of his epigraphs. He issued both types of coins of his predecessor. The lionfish-bow coins have a unique quality of the same devices on the obverse and reverse. Rajendra Chola was succeeded by three sons who became kings of the realm successively and continued the Ceylon man type of the coin. However, one ruler of the Chola lineage stands out for numismatic disruption is Kulottunga Chola (r. 1070-1122 C.E.) who came to inherit both the Eastern Chalukya kingdom of Vengi and the Chola Empire through a shrewd marital alliance set by his maternal grandfather, Rajendra Chola I of his daughter with an Eastern Chalukya prince. Kulottunga I benefitted from the deaths of his maternal uncles and his own succession to the Chalukyan throne at Vengi.

Thus, Kulottunga's coins come in the Eastern Chalukyan fabric of punch-marked gold coins with the Chola 'lion-fish-and-bow' replacing the staple Chalukyan boar as the central emblem along with the legend, *Kataikondacholan* and *Malainadukondacholan* which indicate his conquest over Kataha or Kadaram (identified with modern Keddah in Malaysia) and Malai Nadu or the Chera country. Other gold coins found in Nellore district show the Chola tigerfish-and-bow with some unclear marks and the legend 'Sungandavirttarulinadva' which is an epithet of Kulottunga. Some coins also have 'Kanchi' and 'Ne' possibly for Nellore as epigraphs mention Nellore Madai. Some coins also come with numerals like 27, 31,

33 and 34 pointing to his long reign. Some lighter coins at the British Museum with tiger and fish emblems also have numerals on the reverse of the coins.

[https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp\\_content/S000829IC/P001738/M028925/ET/1523267544P09-M22-AncientTamilCoinagefromtheSangamaPeriod-ET.pdf](https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000829IC/P001738/M028925/ET/1523267544P09-M22-AncientTamilCoinagefromtheSangamaPeriod-ET.pdf), silver and copper coins of the predecessor of Rajendra -1, *i.e.*, Raja Raja-1, follow a particular pattern in depicting the emblems. We could find on the obverse of these coins, a standing figure (king?) placed between five dots to his left and a lamp to his right; the reverse will have a seated figure (king?) and also a legend, *sri rajaraja* in Nagari script. A significant point to be mentioned here is the fact that in all the gold coins of Rajendra Chola -1, so fact reported, his name appears as 'rajendra' only, and they are invariably in Nagari script.

| MEDIEVAL CHOLAS    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| VIJAYALAYA CHOLA   | 848-871   |
| ADITYA I           | 871-907   |
| PARANTAKA CHOLA    | 907-950   |
| GANDARADITYA       | 907-950   |
| ARINJAYA CHOLA     | 956-957   |
| SUNDARA CHOLA      | 957-970   |
| UTTAMA CHOLA       | 970-985   |
| RAJARAJA CHOLA I   | 985-1014  |
| RAJENDRA CHOLA I   | 1012-1044 |
| RAJADHIRAJA CHOLA  | 1018-1054 |
| RAJENDRA CHOLA II  | 1051-1063 |
| VIRARAJENDRA       | 1063-1070 |
| ATHIRAJENDRA CHOLA | 1067-1070 |



RAJARAJA CHOLA I - 985-1014

<https://qph.cf2.quoracdn.net/main-qimg-ecaebbc3e46314a6cc21d66cd95639ad-lq>

Recently, Arumuaga Seetharaman reported one more variety of Rajendra Chola - 1 gold coin with a four line legend, *rajendra cholan* 29 *aa* engraved in Grantha script. But, in the gold coin under discussion he is referred to as *rajendra cholan*, a Tamil form of his name, in Tamil – Grantha script. From this, we are led to infer that Rajendra Chola - 1, being the immediate successor of the great Raja Raja Chola - 1, would have adopted the devices noticed on the coins of his illustrious father. It is not

unusual for the kings in those days to follow an earlier pattern familiar to the public and then adopt other devices favored by them in subsequent issues in later years of their reign period. If it the case with this coin, it could be an earlier issue of Rajendra Chola - I.

<https://interestingsouthindiancoins.blogspot.com/2010/09/rajendra-chola-cold-coin.html>



Kazungi Madai of Rajendra Chola I. with a Tamil Grantha legend 'Rajendra Cholan'. [https://1.bp.blogspot.com/\\_foFfs5tvs8A/TJWIL0TObqI/AAAAAAAAAE2g/2LWWDz3Zn6w/s320/chola.JPG](https://1.bp.blogspot.com/_foFfs5tvs8A/TJWIL0TObqI/AAAAAAAAAE2g/2LWWDz3Zn6w/s320/chola.JPG)



Silver Vellai Kasu of Rajendra Chola I. seated lion with a lamp and a circular legend Sri Raja Rajendra. [https://3.bp.blogspot.com/\\_foFfs5tvs8A/TJWHtnglGeI/AAAAAAAAE2Y/GChH2XMMKtA/s320/for+article+Chola-1-BWboth.JPG](https://3.bp.blogspot.com/_foFfs5tvs8A/TJWHtnglGeI/AAAAAAAAE2Y/GChH2XMMKtA/s320/for+article+Chola-1-BWboth.JPG)



Rajendra Chola's Kahavanu. [http://www.forumancientcoins.com/gallery/albums/userpics/36484/normal\\_Mitchiner-741.jpg](http://www.forumancientcoins.com/gallery/albums/userpics/36484/normal_Mitchiner-741.jpg)





Emblem of Rajendra Chola from a set of copper plates. the setaeed tiger with two lamps and fish are seen under the royal flag. <https://www.worldofcoins.eu/forum/index.php?action=dlattach;attach=41123;image>

|   |  |
|---|--|
|  <p>Copper coin of Rajendra Chola in the Chennai Museum. <a href="https://www.chennaiuseum.org/draft/gallery/04/01/images/choraob.jpg">https://www.chennaiuseum.org/draft/gallery/04/01/images/choraob.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Rajendra Chola's coin with a legend Gangaikonda Chola. <a href="https://www.chennaiuseum.org/draft/gallery/04/01/images/chorega.jpg">https://www.chennaiuseum.org/draft/gallery/04/01/images/chorega.jpg</a></p> |
|---|--|

### Coins of Kulottunga Chola I & Rajadhiraja Chola

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  <p>Kulottunga Chola Coin.<br/><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/ba/Kuloth_unga_chola_coin.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/ba/Kuloth_unga_chola_coin.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Rare gold fanam of Kulottunga Chola with a rooster standing on a branch. With a legend .... Cho... <a href="https://cdn.marukoins.in/uploads/l/2035/2035010713.jpg">https://cdn.marukoins.in/uploads/l/2035/2035010713.jpg</a></p> |
|--|---|



|   |   |
|---|---|
|  <p>Coin of Rajadhiraja Chola. <a href="https://mintage1.s3.amazonaws.com/coin/list/rajadhiraj_gold_O.jpg">https://mintage1.s3.amazonaws.com/coin/list/rajadhiraj_gold_O.jpg</a></p> |  <p>Raja Raja Chola (985-1014 AD)      Maravarman Sundara Pandian (1216-1238 AD)</p> <p>The coin on the left issued by Raja Raja Chola, featuring the king standing and seated on each sides with his title ‘ Sri Raja Raja’ written in Devanagari, and on the right is a coin issued by Sundara Pandian after becoming independent from the Cholas, while copying the same style you can see a tiny fish on the top right signifying their emblem, and his name written in Tamil.</p> <p><a href="https://preview.redd.it/7pcv97eyvhu91.jpg?width=1080&amp;crop=smart&amp;auto=webp&amp;s=b7bfac8d745eeff4f733c1768ec8eb353294e945">https://preview.redd.it/7pcv97eyvhu91.jpg?width=1080&amp;crop=smart&amp;auto=webp&amp;s=b7bfac8d745eeff4f733c1768ec8eb353294e945</a></p> |
|---|---|

#### 4.4: Coins of Cheras

Cheras of the Kongu country are known to have controlled eastern Kerala and only a few kilometres of current western Tamil Nadu in the early medieval period. Present-day central Kerala and Kongu Cheras detached around 8th–9th century CE to form the Chera Perumal kingdom and Kongu Chera kingdom (c. 9th–12th century CE). The exact nature of the relationships between the various branches of Chera rulers are unclear. After this, the present day parts of Kerala and Kongunadu became autonomous. Some of the major dynasties of medieval south India - Chalukya, Pallava, Pandya, Rashtrakuta, and Chola - seem to have conquered the Kongu Chera country. Kongu Cheras appear to have been absorbed into the Pandya political system by 10<sup>th</sup> /11<sup>th</sup> century CE. Even after the dissolution of the Perumal kingdom, royal inscriptions and temple grants, especially from outside Kerala proper, continued to refer the country and the people as the “Cheras or Keralas”. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chera\\_dynasty#Cheras\\_in\\_the\\_medieval\\_period](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chera_dynasty#Cheras_in_the_medieval_period)

The rulers of Venad (the Venad Cheras or the “Kulasekharas”), based out of the port of Kollam in south Kerala, claimed their ancestry from the

Perumals. *Cheranad* was also the name of an erstwhile province in the kingdom of Zamorin of Calicut, which had included parts of present-day Tirurangadi and Tirur Taluks of Malappuram district in it. Later it became a Taluk of Malabar District, when Malabar came under the British Raj. The headquarters of *Cheranad Taluk* was the town of Tirurangadi.<sup>[19][20]</sup> Later the Taluk was merged with Eranad Taluk.

### Chera coinage

A number of coins, assumed to be of the Cheras, mostly found in the Amaravati riverbed in Tamil Nadu, are a major source of early Chera historiography. This includes a number of punch marked coins discovered from Amaravati riverbed. The square coins of copper and its alloys or silver have also been discovered. Most of these early square coins show a bow and arrow, the traditional emblem of the Cheras on the obverse, with or without any legend. Silver-punch marked coins, an imitation of the Maurya coins, and with a Chera bow on the reverse, have been reported. Hundreds of copper coins, attributed to the Cheras, have been discovered from Pattanam in central Kerala. Bronze dies for minting punch marked coins were discovered from a riverbed in Karur.

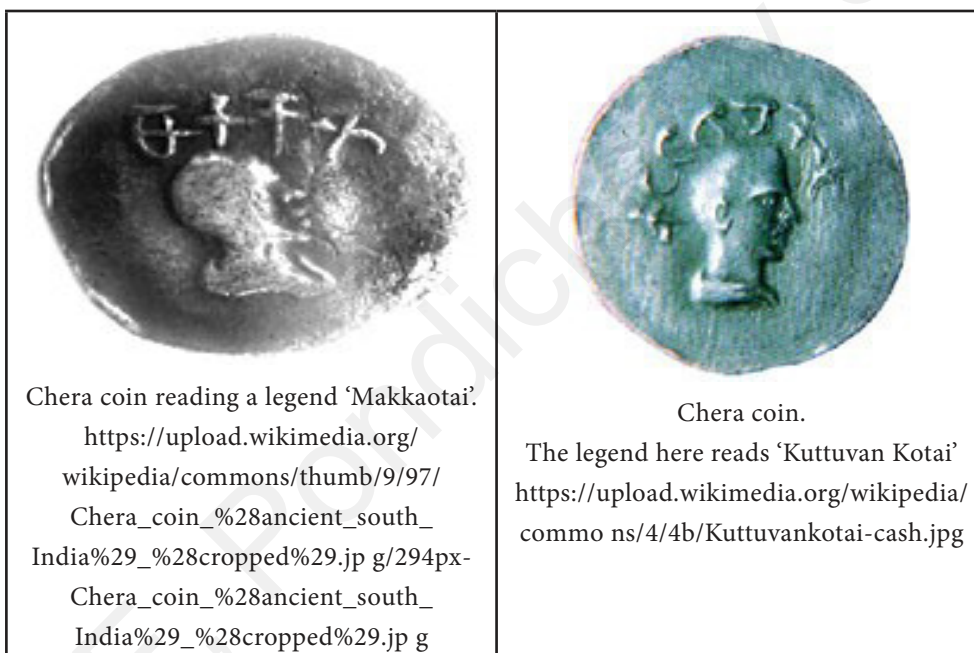


The Chera territories. [https://www.tutorialspoint.com/ancient\\_indian\\_history/images/chera\\_kingdom.jpg](https://www.tutorialspoint.com/ancient_indian_history/images/chera_kingdom.jpg)

Other discoveries include a coin with a portrait and the Brahmi legend "Mak- kotai" above it and another one with a portrait and the legend "Kuttuvan Kotai" above it. Both impure silver coins are tentatively dated to c. 1st century CE or a little later. The reverse side of both coins

are blank. The impure silver coins bearing Brahmi legends “Kollippurai”, “Kollipporai”, “Kol-Irumporai” and “Sa Irumporai” were also discovered from Karur. The portrait coins are generally considered as imitation of Roman coins. All legends, assumed to be the names of the Chera rulers, were in Tamil-Brahmi characters on the obverse. Reverse often contained the bow and arrow symbol. An alliance between the Cholas is evident from a joint coin bearing the Chola tiger on the obverse and the Chera bow and arrow on the reverse. Lakshmi-type coins of possible Sri Lankan origin have also been discovered from Karur. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chera\\_dynasty#Chera\\_coinage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chera_dynasty#Chera_coinage))

The macro analysis of the Mak-kotai coin shows close similarities with the contemporary Roman silver coin. A silver coin with the portrait of a person wearing a Roman-type bristled-crown helmet was also discovered from Amaravati riverbed in Karur. Reverse side of the coin depicts a bow and arrow, the traditional symbol of the Chera family.



#### 4.5: Imperial Pandyas

The Pandyan dynasty, also referred to as the Pandyas of Madurai, was an ancient Tamil dynasty of South India, and among the four great kingdoms of Tamilakam, the other three being the Pallavas, the Cholas and the Cheras. Existing since at least the 4th to 3rd centuries BCE, the dynasty passed through two periods of imperial dominance, the 6th to 10th centuries CE, and under the ‘Later Pandyas’ (13th to 14th centuries CE). Under Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I and Maravarman Kulasekara

Pandyan I, the Pandyas ruled extensive territories including regions of present-day South India and northern Sri Lanka through vassal states subject to Madurai.

The rulers of the three Tamil dynasties were referred to as the “three crowned rulers (the mu-ventar) of the Tamil country”. The origin and the timeline of the Pandya dynasty are difficult to establish. The early Pandya chieftains ruled their country (Pandya Nadu) from the ancient period, which included the inland city of Madurai and the southern port of Korkai. The Pandyas are celebrated in the earliest available Tamil poetry (Sangam literature”). Graeco-Roman accounts (as early as 4th century BCE), the edicts of Maurya emperor Ashoka, coins with legends in Tamil-Brahmi script, and Tamil- Brahmi inscriptions suggest the continuity of the Pandya dynasty from the 3rd century BCE to the early centuries CE. The early historic Pandyas faded into obscurity upon the rise of the Kalabhra dynasty in south India.

From the 6th century to the 9th century CE, the Chalukyas of Badami or Rashtrakutas of the Deccan, the Pallavas of Kanchi, and Pandyas of Madurai dominated the politics of south India. The Pandyas often ruled or invaded the fertile Kaveri (the Chola country), the ancient Chera country (Kongu and central Kerala) and Venadu (southern Kerala), the Pallava country and Sri Lanka.<sup>[16]</sup> The Pandyas fell into decline with the rise of the Cholas of Thanjavur in the 9th century and were in constant conflict with the latter. The Pandyas allied themselves with the Sinhalese and the Cheras against the Chola Empire until it found an opportunity for reviving its frontiers during the late 13th century.

The Pandyas entered their golden age under Maravarman I and Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (13th century). Some early efforts by Maravarman I to expand into the Chola country were effectively checked by the Hoysalas. Jatavarman I (c. 1251) successfully expanded the kingdom into the Telugu country (as far north as Nellore), south Kerala, and conquered northern Sri Lanka. The city of Kanchi became a secondary capital of the Pandyas. The Hoysalas, in general, were confined to Mysore Plateau and even king Somesvara was killed in a battle with Pandyas. Maravarman Kulasekhara I (1268) defeated an alliance of the Hoysalas and the Cholas (1279) and invaded Sri Lanka. The venerable Tooth Relic of the Buddha was carried away by the Pandyas. During this period, the rule of the kingdom was shared among several royals, one of them enjoying primacy over the rest. An internal crisis in the Pandya kingdom coincided



with the Khalji invasion of south India in 1310–11. The ensuing political crisis saw more sultanate raids and plunder, the loss of south Kerala (1312), and north Sri Lanka (1323) and the establishment of the Madurai sultanate (1334). The Pandyas of Uchchangi (9th– 13th century), in the Tungabhadra Valley were related to the Pandyas of Madurai.



<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/34/ImperioPandya1251-1283AD.svg/800px-ImperioPandya1251-1283AD.svg.png>

According to tradition, the legendary Sangams (“the Academies”) were held in Madurai under the patronage of the Pandyas, and some of the Pandyan rulers claimed to be poets themselves. Pandya Nadu was home to a number of renowned temples, including the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai. The revival of the Pandya power by Kadungon (7th century CE) coincided with the prominence of the Shaivite nayanars and the Vaishnavite alvars. It is known that the Pandya rulers followed Jainism for a short period of time in history. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandya\\_dynasty#/media/File:ImperioPandya1251-1283AD.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandya_dynasty#/media/File:ImperioPandya1251-1283AD.svg)

### Pandya Coinage

The Pandyan issued coins in punch marked and die struck techniques in silver during the early period. They were in constant conflicts with the Pallavas in the Tanjaore regions. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century they gained victory and fallen down to the hands of Cholas in the 12<sup>th</sup> century CE. A few gold coins are attributed to the Pandyan rulers. The royal insignia that is seen in almost all the coins is the fish as carried from the early times. The fish is seen single in many coins but sometimes with the other symbols such as bow, conch and a discus etc. some of the coins belonging to this period have the legend in Kannada characters *Sri Panduva Narapa* and *Sri Pandya Dhananjaya* in Nagari or in Telugu. Maravarman Sundara Pandya I or Jatavarman Sundara Pandya II can be attributed to title *Sri Panduva Narapa* and the title *Sri Pandya Dhananjaya* is attributed to Maravarman Sundara Pandya II.

The Pandyan coins besides having the fish emblem along with the Chola standing figure and some other Chalukyan devices associated with a fish. The various dynasties used various symbols on the coins indicating their conquests and defeats. The names Sundara, Sundara Pandya or the letter Su are found on inscribed on these coins. It is difficult to ascertain the name of the ruler by seeing the legends on the coin as there are so many Sundara Pandyas in the geneology of the Pandyas. Some coins show the figure of boar with the title *Vira Pandya* on one side and the figure of Venu gopala on the other side. They are assumed to be issued by the Pandyas as the feudatories of the Cholas. Some coins have the fish symbols and the titles such as *Kodandaraman* and *Kanchi Valangum Perumal*. The Chola standing and sitting type coins have the epithets such as; *bhutala Ellamthalai*, *Parasurama*, *Kulasekhara* etc. *Ellamthalaiyanan* is seen with the standing king on one side and the fish on the other side. *Samarakolahalam* and *Bhuvanekaviran* are found on the coins having a Garuda, *Konerirayan* that has bull and the title *Kaliyugaraman* have a pair of feet.

Some silver coins have a crocodile on one side between Nagari legends of two lines – *Vira Keralasya*. One can see *kalasa* on the other side of these coins or *kumbha* between the two Nagari lines. *Sri Gandarankusasya*. They are also said to be the coins of Vira Kerala Varman of the western coast which is uncertain. *vira Kerala* was one of the titles of Chola Raja Raja. This again suggests that these coins are issued by RAjaraja in Kerala to commemorate his victory.

The Pandyas rose under Kadungon in the sixth century to defeat the Kalabhras and even fought with Pallavas. This second phase of Pandyan power lasted till the period of Maravarman Rajasimha II (c. 900-820) when the rising Chola power submerged the Pandyans of Madurai. The third phase of Pandyan power began with MaravaramanSundara Pandya I (1216-1238 AD) as the sun set on Chola power in the Tamil lands in the thirteenth century. This phase lasted till the fourteenth century when an invasion from Tughluq sultans of Delhi planted a Mahomedan state of Madura Sultanate and later replaced it with Vijayanagara Empire.

The second phase of Pandyan Empire gave rise to a Bull and Fish type of coin series which began according to Biddulph in the middle of the ninth century and lasted till the eleventh century. One unique gold coin attributed to this period is a gold coin with an image of two vertical fish on the obverse with the reverse legend 'Sri Varagunah' attributed to Pandyan 9 ruler, Varagunah II (r. 862-880 C.E.). The coin weighs about 4.24 grams and is in the collection of the National Museum, New Delhi.

The third phase of the Pandyan Empire produced a coinage inspired by the Chola 'Standing king' or 'seated king' on the obverse accompanied by two fish with the king's name. This coinage was initiated during the later Chola period when the Pandyan rule was reinstated by Rajendra Chola I after a marriage treaty with the Pandyans and thus had a good run till the fourteenth century. Unfortunately, the limited names of Pandyan rulers alternating between Vira Pandya and Sundara Pandya. A variety of epithets appear for various rulers till the end of the Pandyan dynasty though they continued to issue coins even in the period of the Vijayanagara period of History till sixteenth century. [https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp\\_content/S000829IC/P001738/M028925/ET/1523267544P09-M22- AncientTamilCoinagefromtheSangamaPeriod-ET.pdf](https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000829IC/P001738/M028925/ET/1523267544P09-M22-AncientTamilCoinagefromtheSangamaPeriod-ET.pdf)

#### *Key Points*

The Numismatic history of South India during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE to about the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE is uncertain. Discovery of very less number of the coins from this period and the picture emerging from this numismatic data is not so encouraging.

The early Pallava Coinage was an uninscribed set of coins in lead with the image of a Bull on the obverse first identified by Walter Elliot in the nineteenth century. This was confirmed by later authors on the basis of the presence of a *Vrishabha Lanchana* or Bull emblem on Pallava copper plate seals. The Pallavas issued coins in lead and copper (high-tin bronze), lead for being soft, ductile and cheaper and high-tin bronze for its gold-like appearance. Silver seems to have been hardly used, although some have been reported from Sri Lanka.

According to Tamil inscriptions, the gold coins of the Chola kingdom weighed around 52 grains of Kalanju. The other seeds such as Manjadi were used for lower standard weights and the coin made in the lower standards weighed 4.5 – 5 seeds/grains. That is one-tenth of the coin weight of Kalanju seeds gold coin. The inscriptions of the Chola period give the names of different coins that are under circulation. The coins such as Rajarajan Madai, Rajendran madai and the Madurantakan Madai suggest that the coins were named after the rulers or their titles.

From the inscriptions of the Cholas we can find some terms denoting the currency circulated in gold, silver and copper. Following are a few of such terms;

- *Pon, Kasu, Kalanju, Manjadi, Madai, Kasu, kunri, Kani* etc.

A number of coins, assumed to be of the Cheras, mostly found in the Amaravati riverbed in Tamil Nadu, are a major source of early Chera historiography. This includes a number of punch marked coins discovered from Amaravati riverbed. The square coins of copper and its alloys or silver have also been discovered. Most of these early square coins show a bow and arrow, the traditional emblem of the Cheras on the obverse, with or without any legend.

The fish is seen single in many coins but sometimes with the other symbols such as bow, conch and a discus etc. some of the coins belonging to this period have the legend in Kannada characters *Sri Panduva Narapa* and *Sri Pandya Dhananjaya* in Nagari or in Telugu. Maravarman Sundara Pandya I or Jatavarman Sundara Pandya II can be attributed to title *Sri Panduva Narapa* and the title *Sri Pandya Dhananjaya* is attributed to Maravarman Sundara Pandya II.



Some coins have the fish symbols and the titles such as *Kodandaraman* and *Kanchi Valangum Perumal*. The Chola standing and sitting type coins have the epithets such as; *bhutala Ellamthalai*, *Parasurama*, *Kulasekhara* etc. *Ellamthalaiyanan* is seen with the standing king on one side and the fish on the other side. *Samarakolahalam* and *Bhuvanekaviran* are found on the coins having a Garuda, *Konerirayan* that has bull and the title *Kaliyugaraman* have a pair of feet.

### *Do you know?*

#### **Coins of Eastern Chalukyas & Kakatiyas.**

##### **Eastern Chalukyas.**

The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi rose as a cadet branch of the main branch in Badami in and around 624 C.E. when Pulakeshin II captured Vengi and bestowed it upon his brother, Kubja Vishnuvardhana I. Vishnuvardhana I ruled Vengi from 624 C.E. till 641 C.E. and acquired the title, Vishmasiddhi (one who attained successes in difficult enterprises). The Eastern Chalukyas continued to be a coveted kingdom between the rulers of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka thus causing and benefitting from the wars between Chalukyas of Badami and the Pallavas of Kanchi in the seventh and eighth centuries; later they also became a bone of contention between the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani and the Imperial Cholas from the tenth to twelfth century.

Rajendra Chola wisely married one of his daughters to Rajaraja Narendra Chalukya. The son born to the couple became Rajendra Kulottunga who took up the ruling of Chola Empire upon the deaths of his maternal uncles and ruled it from 1070

C.E. till 1118 C.E. A large number of copper and base silver coins found in Nalgonda and Vishakhapatnam districts have been found with two types of coins having the legend Vishmasiddhi on them; one type has a lion at the centre with the legend above and another also has lion but the reverse has a double trident with border of rays surmounted by a crescent and flanked by two lamps. M. Rama Rao proposes that the legends on both coins have a different character for the same title, one being square and the other being round; he suggests attribution of one type to Vishnuvardhana I and another to his grandson, Vishnuvardhana II who also took the same title.

The Eastern Chalukyas did not continue to issue many coins till the period of Saktivarman I who around 999 C.E. issued gold punch-marked coins with 7 punches forming the legend 'Sri Chalukyachandra' with a boar to the right flanked by lamps with a goad and an umbrella at the centre. These coins have Saktivarman's regnal year indicated in numerals with the letter Sa (Samvat) with years 1, 4 and 9 available in the series. These were first reported from the island of Cheduba, Arakan and Gudur, Masulipatnam district along with another set of coins of Eastern Chalukya ruler, Rajaraja (1019-1060 C.E.) with similar emblem. Rajaraja's regnal years range from 3 to 37. Another hoard found at Dowlaishwaram, Eastern Godavari had coins of Rajaraja Chalukya with those of his son Rajendra Kulottunga with a tiger replacing the boar as the central device with legends like 'Kataikondacholan' with the regnal years ranging from 28 till 33. Another set of coins found in this series has the legend 'Malainadukondacholan' with the regnal years from 33 till 36. The script on the coins of Kulottunga is Tamil Grantha of the twelfth century C.E. according to T. Balakrishnan Nayar who examined and published the Dowlaishwaram.

### **Coins of the Kakatiyas and their contemporaries**

The Kakatiyas rose as feudatories of Chalukyas of Kalyani in the tenth century itself under Beta I, Prola I and their successors but rose to independent status in the period of Kakati Rudradeva (1150-1195 C.E.) centred upon the region of Anamkonda and Warangal. They rose to great heights under Ganapati (1199-1261 C.E.) and his daughter, Rudramadevi (1259-1295 C.E.). Rudramadevi was succeeded by the last Kakatiya ruler, Prataprudra (1295-1323 C.E.) whose reign was interrupted by the invasion of the Tughluqs. Kakatiya coins have undergone a lot of false starts over the years beginning with the discovery of 10 gold coins with the name 'Rudra' found in faraway Konkan in nineteenth century being attributed to Rudradeva. Some other misses were by Elliot himself. However, he reports a copper coin with a bull and fragmentary legend 'SrimatKakati... Pratap - ra. ya'.

However, copper coins found at Malkhed with divided legend 'Kakatiya' and 'Pratap Rudra' with dates in Saka era 1108 and 1109 confirm their attribution to Pratapa Rudra deva I (c. 1150-1195 C.E.). Another solitary gold coin found from Kavalivadavalli treasure trove has a reverse legend read as (KA)KATI GANA(PATI) with the crude image of a lion with open mouth, raised paw and twisted tail. There is another set of punch-marked gold coins with the Telugu legend 'Dayagajakesari' and 'Rayagajakesari'. These coins may be Early Kakatiya coins fashioned on the Eastern Chalukya paradigm. An epigraph found in Guntur district dated 1238 C.E. refers to a KesariGadya which might refer to a coin with lion device on it or else to the actual term Kesari written on it.

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### Chapter Check-up

1. Write about the Pallava Coinage.
2. What are the significant features of the Chola coins?
3. What is the contribution of the Cheras and Pandyas to the Indian Numismatics?

### Short Answers

1. Raja Raja Chola coins.
2. Denominations of the Chola Coins.
3. Pandyan emblems and epithets on the coins
4. Coins of Rajendra Chola.

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**UNIT - V****Coinage of the Vijayanagar Dynasty****Structure**

Learning Objectives

5.1: Coinage of the Vijayanagar Dynasty

Key Points

Do you know?

Chapter Check-up

Glossary

**Learning Objectives**

*After going through this unit you should be able to*

- Know and understand the historical importance of the Vijayanagara coins issued by the Sangama, Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties.
- Metallurgy of the Vijayanagara coinage.
- Minting techniques of the Vijayanagara coins.
- Denominations of the Vijayanagara currency.

**5.1: Coinage of the Vijayanagar Dynasty****The Vijayanagar Kingdom, 1336–1646**

Founded in 1336 in the wake of the rebellions against Tughluq rule in the Deccan, the Hindu Vijayanagar empire lasted for more than two centuries as the dominant power in south India. Its history and fortunes were shaped by the increasing militarization of peninsular politics after the Muslim invasions and the commercialization that made south India a major participant in the trade network linking Europe and East Asia. Urbanization and monetization of the economy were the two other significant developments of the period that brought all the peninsular kingdoms into highly competitive political and military activities in the race for supremacy.

**Development of the state**

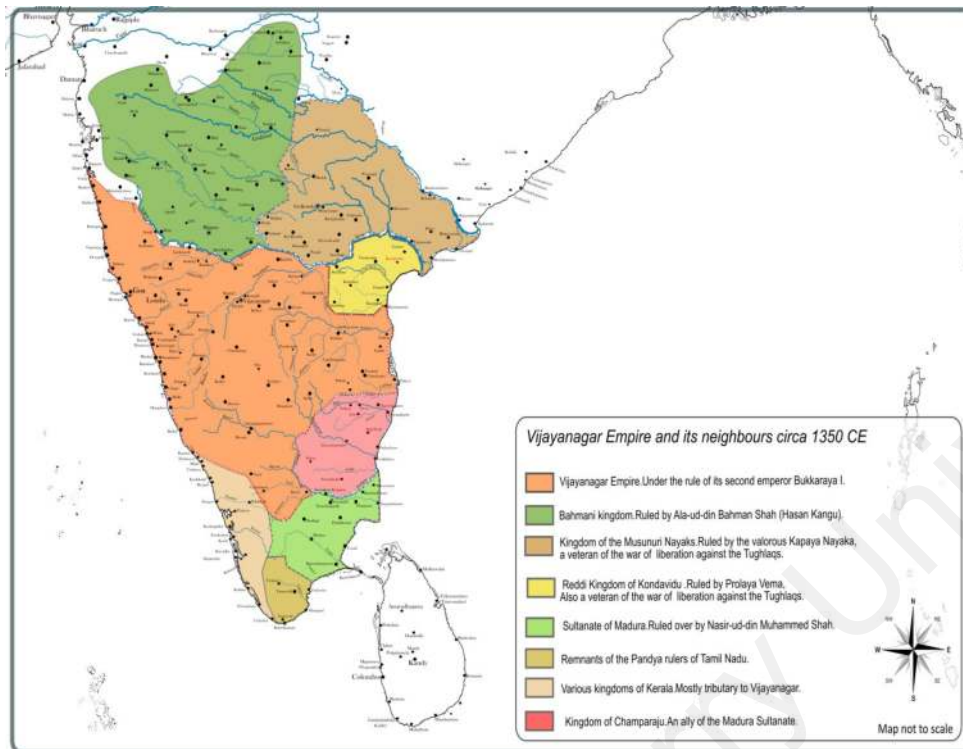
The kingdom of Vijayanagar was founded by Harihara and Bukka, two of five brothers (surnamed Sangama) who had served in the administrations of both Kakatiya and Kampili before those kingdoms were conquered by the armies of the Delhi sultanate in the 1320s. When Kampili fell in 1327, the two brothers are believed to have been captured and taken to Delhi, where they converted to Islam. They were returned to the Deccan as governors of Kampili for the sultanate with the hope that they would be able to deal with the many local revolts and invasions by neighbouring Hindu kings.

They followed a conciliatory policy toward the landholders of the area, many of whom had not accepted Muslim rule, and began a process of consolidation and expansion. Their first campaign was against the neighbouring Hoysala king, Ballala III of Dorasamudra, but it stagnated; after the brothers reconverted to Hinduism under the influence of the sage Madhavacarya (Vidyaranya) and proclaimed their independence from the Delhi sultanate, however, they were able to defeat Ballala and thereby secure their home base. Harihara I (reigned 1336–56) then established his new capital, Vijayanagar, in an easily defensible position south of the Tungabhadra River, where it came to symbolize the emerging medieval political culture of south India. The kingdom's expansion in the first century of its existence made it the first south Indian state to exercise enduring control over different linguistic and cultural regions, albeit with subregional and local chiefly powers exercising authority as its agents and subordinates.

**Conquests**

In 1336 Harihara, with the help of his brothers, held uneasy suzerainty over lands extending from Nellore, on the southeast coast, to Badami, south of Bijapur on the western side of the Deccan. All around him new Hindu kingdoms were rising, the most important of which were the Hoysala kingdom of Ballala and the Andhra confederacy, led by Kapaya Nayaka. However, Ballala's kingdom was disadvantageously situated between the Ma'bar sultanate and Vijayanagar, and within two years after Ballala was killed by the sultan in 1343–44, his kingdom had been conquered by Bukka, Harihara's brother, and annexed to Vijayanagar. This was the most important victory of Harihara's reign; the new state now could claim

sovereignty from sea to sea, and in 1346 the five brothers attended a great celebration at which Bukka was made joint ruler and heir.



Vijayanagara empire and its neighbours. <https://jambudveep.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/extent-of-vijayanagar-empire-1350ce.png>

Harihara's brothers made other, less significant conquests of small Hindu kingdoms during the next decade. However, the foundation of the Bahmani sultanate in 1347 created a new and greater danger, and Harihara was forced to lessen his own expansionist activities to meet the threat posed by this powerful and aggressive new state on his northern borders. During Harihara's reign the administrative foundation of the Vijayanagar state was laid. Borrowing from the Kakatiya kings he had served, he created administrative units called *stholas*, *nadus*, and *simas* and appointed officials to collect revenue and to carry on local administration, preferring Brahmans to men of other castes. The income of the state apparently was increased by the reorganization, although centralization probably did not proceed to the stage where salaried officials collected directly for the government in most areas. Rather, most land remained under the direct control of subordinate chiefs or of a hierarchy of local landholders, who paid some revenue and provided some troops for the king. Harihara also encouraged increased cultivation in some areas by allowing lower revenue payments for lands recently reclaimed from the forests. (<https://www.britannica.com/place/India/The-Vijayanagar-empire-1336-1646>)

### **The four Pillars of the Vijayanagara Empire – the four dynasties**

The Vijayanagara kingdom is ruled by four different dynasties. They are; Sangama,, Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties and ruled for nearly three centuries.

#### **Sangama Rulers Harihara**

Harihara I founded the Vijayanagara empire and was also known as 'Hakka' or 'Vira Harihara.' He was Bhavana Sangama's eldest son and a Kuruba clan descendant. He was also the founder of the Sangama Dynasty. Following his ascension to power, he built a fort at Barkuru on the western coast of what is now Karnataka. He ruled the northern parts of the Hoysala Empire before assuming control of the kingdom in 1343, following the death of Hoysala Veera Ballala III. Harihara I was known as '**Karnataka Vidya Vilas,**' '**Arirayavibhada,**' or '**fire to enemy kings,**' and '**Bhashegetappuvarayaraganda,**' or punisher of feudal lords who failed to keep their promises according to the inscriptions of his time.

#### **Bukka**

Bukka Raya I was a Sangama Dynasty ruler who ruled over the Vijayanagara Empire. This ancient ruler supported Telugu poet Nachana Soma. The accounts of Bukka's and Raya's early lives are shrouded in mystery, and many legends surround these people. Harihara I was also known as Hakka. According to popular belief, Hakka and Bukka were born in the Kuruba clan and served as commanders in the King of Warangal's royal army. Following Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's defeat of Warangal's ruler, Hakka and Bukka were captured, imprisoned, and transferred to Delhi. They were compelled to convert to Islam.

#### **Harihara II (1377 - 1406 CE)**

Harihara II was the Vijayanagar Empire's ruler during the Sangama Dynasty. From 1377 to 1404 CE, he was in power. This ruler supported the famous Kannada poet Madhura. During the reign of this emperor, who was bestowed with the titles '**Vedamarga Pravartak**' and '**Vaidikamarga Sthapanachary,**' significant work on the Vedas was completed. Harihara II primarily ruled the Vijayanagara region, known as Hampi. The ruins of Harihara II's palace can be found among the ruins of Hampi.



### Deva Raya I (1406 - 1422 CE)

Deva Raya I (reigned 1406–1422) was a Vijayanagara Empire king (of the Sangama Dynasty). After Harihara II died, his sons fought over the throne, with Deva Raya I eventually emerging victorious. He was a capable ruler known for his military prowess and support for irrigation projects in his kingdom. Deva Raya I, on the other hand, secured the throne for himself in 1406. In his wars with the Bahamani Sultan, he suffered some setbacks and died in 1422. Deva Raya I was succeeded by his son Vira-Vijaya, whom Nuniz refers to as “Visaya,” and who reigned for six years, according to Nuniz.

### Deva Raya II (1425 - 1446 CE)

Deva Raya II ruled the Vijayanagara Empire from 1422 to 1446 CE. He was the most powerful ruler of the Sangama dynasty, and he was a skilled administrator, warrior, and scholar. He wrote well-known Kannada works (Sobagina Sone and Amaruka) as well as Sanskrit works (Mahanataka Sudhanidhi). Despite the fact that Deva Raya II's wars with the Bahmanis ended in defeat and loss, his reign was marked by administrative reorganisation. Muslims were admitted into the army by him to compete with the Bahmanis. In order to control and regulate trade, he appointed his right-hand man,

Lakkanna or Laksmana, to the lordship of the southern sea, which is in charge of overseas commerce. **Nicolo Conti and Abdur Razzaq**, a Persia envoy, visited Vijayanagar in 1420 and 1443, respectively, and left glowing descriptions of the city and the Vijaynagar Empire.

### End of Sangama Dynasty

Deva Raya II died in 1446 and was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Malikarjuna, who repelled a combined attack on his capital by the Bahmani Sultan and the Raja of the Hindu Kingdom of Orissa and managed to keep his kingdom intact during his reign. **Virupaksha Raya II** was a Sangama Dynasty king of the Vijayanagara Empire. Virupaksha Raya II succeeded his uncle, Mallikarjuna Raya, a corrupt and weak ruler who consistently lost to the empire's enemies, in 1465. During his reign, the Saluva chief **Narasimha of Chandragiri**, whose ancestors had faithfully served the Vijayanagara kingdom as its feudatories, rose to prominence and resisted the Bahmani kingdom and the King of Orissa. Raja Purusottama

Gajapati of Orissa advanced as far south as Tiruvannamalai, while the Bahmani advanced into the Doab between Krishna and the Tungabhadra. To protect the kingdom from these threats, Narasimha Saluva deposed his worthless master and seized the throne for himself around 1480. Thus, the Sangam dynasty was deposed in what has come to be known as the “first Usurpation,” and Vijaynar became part of the **Saluva dynasty**. (<https://prepp.in/news/e-492-sangama-dynasty-vijayanagara-empire-medieval-india-history-notes>)

### Saluva Dynasty

The **Saluva dynasty** was the second dynasty to rule the Vijayanagara Empire and was created by the Saluvas, who by historical tradition were natives of the Kalyani region of northern Karnataka in modern India. The Gorantla inscription traces their origins to this region from the time of the Western Chalukyas and Kalachuris of Karnataka. The term “Saluva” is known to lexicographers as “hawk” used in hunting. They later spread into the east coast of modern Andhra Pradesh, perhaps by migration or during the Vijayanagara conquests during the 14th century.

**Saluva Narasimha Deva Raya** (1431–1491 CE) was an emperor of the Vijayanagara Empire from the Saluva Dynasty.<sup>[1]</sup> A patron of the Madhwa saint Sripadaraya, he authored the Sanskrit work *Rama Bhyudayam*. He also patronised Kannada poet Kavi Linga. In 1452, he was conferred the title *Maha Mandaleshwara* of Chandragiri during the reign of emperor Mallikarjuna Raya. His father Saluva Gunda was the governor of Chandragiri. As emperor, Saluva Narasimha tried to expand the empire, though he continually faced difficulties caused from rebelling governors. By 1491, he lost Udayagiri to the Gajapati Monarch Kapilendra Deva while the Chiefs of Ummattur in the Mysore region, Saluvas of Hadavalli and Santharas of Karkala from coastal Karnataka region, Srirangapatna and Sambetas of Peranipadu in Cuddapah still remained threats to the empire.

Saluva Narasimha's war with the Gajapatis over Udayagiri in 1489 proved disastrous when he was taken prisoner and released later after giving up the fort and surrounding areas to the Gajapatis of Orissa. However he was successful at conquering the western ports of Kannada country of Mangalore, Bhatkal, Honnavar and Bakanur. This success enabled him to trade for swift horses with the Arabs. He took more efforts in the upkeep of his cavalry and army in general. Saluva Narasimha would die in 1491 with sons that were too young to ascend to the throne. Their guardianship

was entrusted to Narasa Nayaka, a loyal general and minister from the Tuluva family.

**Thimma Bhupala** (died 1491 CE) was the elder son and heir-apparent of Saluva Narasimha Deva Raya, the Sovereign of the Vijayanagara Empire. During the reign of his father, he held the office of the *Yuvaraja*.<sup>[1]</sup> Prince Thimma succeeded his father in 1491 but was soon assassinated by an army commander loyal to the Sangamas during a period of political unrest in Vijayanagara. He was succeeded by his younger brother Narasimha Raya II. **Narasimha II** came to the throne following the assassination of his elder brother. He was only a teenager when he was crowned the Emperor of the Vijayanagara, and real power lay in the hands of his guardian, the imperial regent Tuluva Narasa Nayaka. This situation continued for twelve years until Tuluva Narasa Nayaka died in 1503. By this time, Narasimha II was an adult and there was no justification for the appointment of a regent. Nevertheless, the late regent's eldest son, Tuluva Vira Narasimha Raya, remained the power behind the throne due to his control of the army. He compelled Narasimha II to name him the Dalavayi (commander-in-chief of the army) and also the *Sarvadhikari* ("Administrator General", effectively Regent). There developed an atmosphere of great tension between the two Narasimhas. Both of them considered that they had a greater right to rule the empire. Tuluva Narasa Nayaka had later pacified the country, suppressed the supporters of the old Sangama dynasty, and maintained order during the minority of the usurper's two sons. With all this background, Tuluva Vira Narasimha felt that he had a greater right to rule than the Emperor Narasimha II. Finally, in 1505, only two years after the death of the old imperial regent Tuluva Narasa Nayaka, Emperor Narasimha Raya II was assassinated at the fortress of Penukonda, probably by henchmen of Vira Narasimha Raya. With his death ended the reign of the Saluva dynasty, whose three emperors (father and two sons) had reigned for a total of only twenty years. Upon Emperor Narasimha II's death, his Dalavayi Tuluva Vira Narasimha Raya was proclaimed the Emperor of Vijayanagara and the Tuluva dynasty rose to power. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saluva\\_dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saluva_dynasty))

### Tuluva Dynasty

The kingdom's original home was the western Tulu-speaking region. A Sanskrit epigraph on the eastern wall of Tirumala temple describes Krishnadevaraya's ancestors. Timmabhupati and his wife Devaki are the

first Tuluva ancestors to be mentioned. Timmabhupati is followed by his son Ishvara and consort Bukkamma, and then by a certain Narasa Bhupala, who is none other than Emperor Krishnadevaraya's father, Tuluva Narasa Nayaka. Tuluva Narasa Nayaka, a powerful warlord, is credited with the conquest of the Gajapatis as well as certain Muslim rulers. Krishnadevaraya, a Tulu speaker, was noted for being linguistically neutral while ruling a multilingual empire. He is known to have patronised poets and issued inscriptions in languages as diverse as Sanskrit, Tamil, Kannada, and Telugu. However, he elevated Telugu as a royal language, possibly due to the dominance of Telugu-speaking chiefs, and wrote the epic poem Amuktamalyada in it. Tuluva rulers were devout Vaishnavas who supported Vaishnavism. Krishnadevaraya's Kulaguru was Dvaita saint Vyasa-tirtha. The fall of the Tuluva dynasty marked the beginning of the Vijayanagar empire's demise.

#### **Vira Narasimha Raya (1505 - 1509 CE)**

The Saluva dynasty was also short-lived, and Vira Narasimha established a new dynasty known as the Tulva dynasty. From 1505 to 1509, he ruled. He was a religious king who bestowed gifts at sacred sites. Legend has it that, while dying in 1509, Vira Narasimha Raya asked his minister Saluva Thimma (Thimmarasa) to blind his younger brother Krishna Deva Raya so that his own eight-year-old son could become king of Vijayanagar. Thimmarasa, on the other hand, brought the king a pair of goat eyes and informed him that he had killed Krishna Deva Raya. However, there is no evidence to support anything other than a friendly relationship between the two half-brothers and a smooth coronation of Krishna Deva Raya.

#### **Krishna Deva Raya (1509 - 1529 CE)**

Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529 CE) was the most powerful emperor of the Vijayanagara Empire. At the apex of the empire, he presided over it. He is regarded as a hero by people of Kannada and Telugu descent in South India and is regarded as one of India's most illustrious kings. Emperor Krishnadevaraya was also given the titles Andhra Bhoja and Kannada Rajya Rama Ramana. He was assisted in administration by the capable Prime Minister Timmarusu. Timmarusu was responsible for Krishnadevaraya's coronation. Krishnadevaraya looked up to Timmarusu as a father figure. He was the son of Nagala Devi and Tuluva Narasa Nayaka, an army

commander under Saluva Narasimha Deva Raya, who soon took over the empire's sovereignty to keep it from disintegrating.

### **Achyuta Deva Raya (1529 - 1542 CE)**

Achyuta Deva Raya was the ruler of the South India Vijayanagara Empire. He was Krishna Deva Raya's younger brother, whom he succeeded in 1529. Fernao Nuniz was a Portuguese traveller, chronicler, and horse trader who spent three years in Vijayanagara during the reign of Achyutaraya. Achyuta Deva Raya became king during a difficult period. The days of peace and prosperity under Krishnadevaraya were drawing to a close. Feudators and enemies were waiting for a chance to bring the empire down. In addition, Achyuta Deva Raya had to compete for the throne with the powerful Aliya Rama Raya. While Nuniz's works portray Achyuta Deva Raya as a king given to vices and cruelty, there is sufficient evidence to show that the king was notable in his own right and fought hard to keep the kingdom's prosperity alive. Krishna Deva Raya had personally chosen him as his successor.

### **Sada Siva Raya (1542 - 1570 CE)**

Sadasiva Raya (1542–1570) ruled the Vijayanagara Empire in 16th century India, a powerful Southern Indian empire based in the Deccan region. He ascended to power following the death of his uncle Achyuta Deva Raya in 1543. Aliya Rama Raya, Krishnadevaraya's son-in-law, helped make his coronation possible. Sadasiva escaped the clutches of the ambitious regent Salakam Timmu Raju and was later elevated to the throne by the minister Rama Raya, who initially acted as regent but gradually became the de facto ruler of the kingdom. The Tuluva dynasty ruled from 1491 to 1570. Sadasiva Raya was the Tuluva dynasty's last king. Krishna Deva Raya was the most popular king of the Tuluva dynasty. The Tuluva Dynasty was the third of four dynasties to rule the Vijayanagara Empire. It was preceded by the Saluva Dynasty and succeeded by the Aravidu Dynasty. (<https://prepp.in/news/e-492-tuluva-dynasty-vijayanagara-empire-medieval-india-history-notes>)

### **Aravidu Dynasty**

The **Aravidu Dynasty** was the fourth and last Hindu dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire in South India. Its founder was Tirumala Deva Raya, whose brother Rama Raya had been the masterful regent of the last ruler



of the previous dynasty. Rama Raya's death at the Battle of Talikota in 1565 led to the subsequent destruction of Vijayanagar by the combined forces of the Muslim states of the Deccan. The Aravidu family claimed to be Kshatriyas and were based in Andhra region. They claimed to belong to the Atreya gotra and traced their lineage to the Eastern Chalukya king Rajaraja Narendra. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aravidu\\_dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aravidu_dynasty)

**Rama Raya** (died 23 January 1565 CE) was a statesman of the Vijayanagara Empire, the son-in-law of Emperor Krishna Deva Raya and the progenitor of the Aravidu dynasty of Vijayanagara Empire, the fourth and last dynasty of the empire. As a regent, he was the de facto ruler of the empire from 1542 to 1565, although legally the emperor during this period was Sadasiva Raya, who was merely a puppet ruler. Rama Raya was killed at the Battle of Talikota, after which the Vijayanagara Empire got fragmented into several semi-independent principalities paying only nominal allegiance to the empire. Rama Raya remained loyal to the legitimate dynasty until it was finally extinguished by war, with the notable exception of imprisoning the appointed ruler Sadasiva Raya and ruling in his stead. In 1565, it was Rama Raya, as the pre-eminent general of the Vijayanagar army, who led the defense against the invading army of Deccan Sultans (i.e. Husain Nizam Shah, Ali Adil Shah and Ibrahim Qutb Shah) in the battle of Talikota.

This battle, which had seemed an easy victory for the large Vijayanagar army, instead became a disaster as two Muslim commanders (Gilani brothers) of the Vijayanagara army betrayed and switched sides and turned their loyalty to the united Sultanates during critical point of battle. It led to the surprise capture and death by beheading of Rama Raya who led the army, a blow from which it never recovered. Rama Raya was beheaded by Hussain Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar, the Indian Muslim of Deccani origin. His severed head was on display at Ahmednagar at the anniversary of the battle of Talikota and would be covered in oil and red pigment by the descendant of his executioner.

The city of Vijayanagara was thoroughly sacked by the invaders and the inhabitants were massacred. The royal family was largely exterminated. Vijayanagara, once a city of fabled splendour, the seat of a vast empire, became a desolate ruin,<sup>[10]</sup> now known by the name of a sacred inner suburb within it, Hampi. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama\\_Raya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama_Raya)

**Tirumala Deva Raya** (r. 1570 - 1572 CE) was the first crowned Emperor of Vijayanagara from the Aravidu Dynasty. He was the younger brother of Rama Raya and the husband of princess Vengalamba, making him the son-in-law of Emperor Krishna Deva Raya. Following the Battle of Talikota, he rescued the last Tuluva Emperor, Sadasiva Raya, and relocated the imperial capital to Penukonda. After Sadasiva's death in 1570 CE, he ascended as the Emperor of Vijayanagara. He was succeeded by his son, Sriranga I in 1572. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tirumala\\_Deva\\_Raya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tirumala_Deva_Raya)

**Sriranga Deva Raya** (r. 1572 – 1586 CE) was the second Emperor of Vijayanagara from the Aravidu Dynasty. He reined the empire from the fortress of Penukonda. Sriranga succeeded his father, Emperor Tirumala Deva Raya. After the fall of Vijayanagara to Turko-Persian Sultanates of Deccan, he carried out the restoration of the empire from Penukonda. His reign was marred with repeated invasions and subsequent losses of territory to his Turko-Persian Muslim neighbours.

In 1576, the Turko-Persian Sultan of Bijapur Ali Adil Shah I laid siege to the imperial capital fortress in Penukonda for three months, but at the end the emperor defeated the invading sultan which helped his able general Savaram Chennappa defeat the bijapur army. In 1579, the Turko-Persian Sultan of Golconda raided and plundered the rich temple of Narasimha at Ahobilam. By 1580, the Kondaveedu province was lost to the same. The emperor successfully recaptured Ahobilam. He died in 1586 CE, without an heir and was succeeded by his youngest brother Venkatapathi Raya, the governor of Chandragiri. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sriranga\\_Deva\\_Raya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sriranga_Deva_Raya))

**Venkatapati Raya** was the 3rd and the greatest Emperor of Vijayanagara from the Aravidu Dynasty. He succeeded his older brother, the Emperor Sriranga Deva Raya as the ruler of Vijayanagara Empire with bases in Penukonda, Chandragiri and Vellore. His reign of nearly three decades saw a revival in the strength and prosperity of the empire. He successfully dealt with the Turko - Persian Deccan sultans of Bijapur and Golkonda, the internal disorders, promoting economic revival in the realm. He subdued the rebelling Nayakas of Tamil Nadu and parts of present-day Andhra Pradesh. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venkatapati\\_Raya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venkatapati_Raya)

**Sriranga II** (r. 1614 CE) was nominated in 1614 by Emperor Venkata II to succeed him as the Emperor of Vijayanagara. Sriranga was supported by a faction headed by Yachama Nayaka of Recherla Velama dynasty, one of

the Venkata II's loyal viceroys and commanders and Nayak of Venkatagiri, but was not favored by a set of nobles headed by Gobburi Jagga Raya, brother (or father) of Venkata II's favourite Queen Obayamma. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sriranga\\_II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sriranga_II))

**Rama Deva Raya** (1617–1632 CE) ascended the throne after a gruesome war in 1617 as the King of Vijayanagara Empire. In 1614 his father, Sriranga II the preceding King and his family were gruesomely murdered by rival factions headed by Jagga Raya, who was one of their kins. Rama Deva himself was smuggled out of the prison by Yachama Naidu, a faithful commander and the viceroy of earlier king Venkata II. Rama Deva Raya, with no brothers and sons nominated Peda Venkata Raya (Venkata III), grandson of Aliya Rama Raya, now governing Anekonda as successor and died on 1632, aged 30 after a troublesome rule of 15 years.. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama\\_Deva\\_Raya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rama_Deva_Raya))

**Venkata III** was the grandson of Aliya Rama Raya. Venkata III belonged to a Telugu family and became the King of the Vijayanagara Empire from 1632 to 1642. His brothers-in-law were Damarla Venkatappa Nayaka and Damarla Ayyappa Nayaka, both sons of Damarla Chennappa Nayakadu. In 1637 the Nayaks of Tanjore and Madurai, out of some complications attempted to seize Venkata III and attacked Vellore but were defeated and peace was established. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peda\\_Venkata\\_Raya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peda_Venkata_Raya))

**Sriranga III** (1642–1678/1681 CE) was the last ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire, who came to power in 1642 following the death of his uncle Venkata III. He was also a great grandson of Aliya Rama Raya. Sriranga III spent his last years under the support of one of his vassal chieftains, Shivappa Nayaka of Ikkeri, and was still hoping to retrieve Vellore from the Muslim forces. Thirumala Nayaka's treachery to Sriranga III made the Mysore ruler Kanthirava Narasara I wage a series of ravaging wars with Madurai, later capturing the territories of Coimbatore and Salem, regions which were retained by Mysore till 1800. The rule of Vellore was then passed over to the Bijapur Sultanate. The Mysore ruler Kanthirava Narasara I still recognised Sriranga as a namesake emperor. Sriranga died in 1678/1681 as an emperor without an empire, putting an end to over three centuries of Vijayanagara rule in India. Sriranga's only daughter was married to Srivallabha, a descendant of Narasimhacharya. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sriranga\\_III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sriranga_III))

## 5.2: Vijayanagara Coinage

Numerous coins were minted and circulated in the Vijayanagar kingdom. They were mostly minted in three metals; gold, silver and copper for circulation. These coins bear various symbols on the obverse and the name of the king on the reverse. These coins were published in various publications and details were noticed in them.

### Harihara I (1336-1357)

Harihara I, the first king of the dynasty issued several types of coins. His coins were discovered in several places in South India including Karur, Madurai and Coimbatore in Tamilnadu. Coins of Harihara were round and minted in gold, silver and copper. The sizes of these coins vary from 16 mms to 6 mms. His gold coin weigh from 3.4 gm to 0.14 gm, the silver issues from 0.16 to 0.06gm, and copper coins from 3.82 gm to 0.6 gm. It is generally believed that the coins with the Kannada legend were minted and circulated in the Karnataka and Andhra region. Those coins with the Nagari legend were minted and circulated in South India.



Hanuman on the gold coin of Harihara I. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0873.378-470.12.jpg>

Coins of Harihara I are generally identified on the basis of the legend found on the reverse. It is usually his name Sri Harihara rendered in Kannada or Nagari scripts. This legend is usually found in two levels separated by one horizontal line. In some of his coins, legends are not visible due to the damaged flan of the coin or the improper placement of the die. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: 1. Garuda, 2. Hanuman, 3. Lakshmi, 4. Lion and 5. Vishnu. Coins with the Garuda figure on the obverse are numerous and are mostly issued in copper and found in Gingee and Tiruvannamalai areas in Tamilnadu. On the obverse of these coins has the figure of Garuda and on the reverse the

Nagari legend appears in three lines as Sri Vira Harihara. In some coins two line Nagari legend Harihara and the short form of “Ha” also appear.

Many coins with the Hanuman image on the obverse were discovered from Karur, Coimbatore, and Tirukkoyilur. The obverse has the Hanuman figure and the reverse has the name of the King in Kannada or Nagari characters. In the Kannada legend the name appears as Sri Vira Harihara in three lines with interlineations. These coins were minted in gold, silver and copper. There are other issues with the two line legend Sri Harihara or Harihara in the Nagari script. All the coins so far reported in this series are in copper and were found in different parts of South India. Sometimes the figure of Hanuman is said to be ‘frontal’. He is said to have bent legs and supposed to be ‘running’. His hand postures were also not properly described. The obverse of these coins has the seated figure, of Vishnu identified as Narayana and holding a conch and a discus. The reverse has the Nagari legend, Sri Harihara or Harihara in two lines.

#### **Bukka 1 (1354-1377)**

Coins of Bukka were mostly round and minted in gold, silver and copper. His gold coins weigh from 3.85 gms to 3.4 gm, silver coins weigh from 0.20 gms to 0.07 gms, copper issues from 3.70 gm to 1.30 gms. The size of these coins varies from 15 mms to 5 mms. His coins usually have his name Sri Vira Bukaraya in Kannada, or Nagari scripts. The legend found on the reverse of his coins is usually in two levels separated by one horizontal line. His coins may be clasified on the basis of devices found on the obverse into four types as follows: 1. Bull, 2.Elephant, 3.Garuda and 4. Hanuman. In the Bull type of Bukka’s coins, the obverse has a bull facing right, a pellet in the crescent above. The reverse has a conch and discus and below the symbols the Kannada legend ‘Bu’ appeal, which is considered as the short form of Bukka.



Bukkaraya gold coin with Hanuman on the obverse and the legend Bukkaraya in the reverse.

<https://coinindia.com/MNI0874.392-431.74.jpg>





Gold gadyana of Bukkaraya I.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/fb/Bukkaraya\\_I\\_Coin.png/500px-Bukkaraya\\_I\\_Coin.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/fb/Bukkaraya_I_Coin.png/500px-Bukkaraya_I_Coin.png)

### **Harihara II (1377 -1404)**

Coins of Harihara II were mostly round and minted in gold, silver and copper. His gold coins weigh from 1.80 gms to 1.65 gms, silver coins weigh from 0.31 gms to 0.06 gms and copper issues weigh from 3.04 gms to 2.5 gms. The size of these coins vary from 1.6 mm to 5 mm. Coins of Harihara II have his name in Nagari script as Sri Pratapa Harihara, on the reverse. The legend is usually found in two levels separated by one horizontal line. On the obverse of his coins found the following devices: 1. Brahma, 2. Bull, 3. Elephart, 4. Lakshmi Narayana, 5. Uma - Mahesvara, 6. Numerals, and legend Harihara, and 7. Silver coins with legend on both sides. Very few coins with the image of Brahma are found. These coins were minted only in gold. On the obverse of the coin Brahma and Sarasvati are found seated in padmasana. Since pustaka as an attribute is clearly visible, the image could easily be identified as Brahma, though the other attributes are not clear. We may suggest that one of Brahma's hands is held in abhayamudra, and the other holds a ladle, the kalasa. Sarasvati in her hand holds an arch like rod and this object has been identified as Rudravina, an attribute generally associated with her. On the reverse the Nagari legend appear in three lines as Sripratapa Harihara.



Gold coin of Harihara II. Siva Parvati coin. Siva is holding a damaru.  
<https://coinindia.com/MNI0877-damaru-508.26.jpg>



Siva Parvathi coin of Harihara II. Siva is holding a parasu and mriga. The devanagari legend reads Sri pratapa harihara. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0877-parasu-635.12.jpg>



Silver coin of Harihara II weighing 10 rattis. Legend reads; Rajadhiraja. Lion in the obverse. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0873.333-Rajadiraja-460.57.jpg>



Silver tara of Harihara II. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0878.427-640.06.jpg>

### Devaraya 1 (1406-1422)

Coins of Devaraya I were mostly minted in gold, silver and copper. His gold coins weigh from 3.4 gms to 1.7 gms, silver issues from 0.20 gms to 0.2 gms and copper coins weigh from 3.4 gms to 0.7 gms. The sizes vary from 17 mm to 7 mm. His coins are found with the name Sri Pratapa Devaraya in Nagari script on the reverse. The legend is usually found in three lines separated by two horizontal lines. In some coins the legend is in two lines. The obverses of his coins bear the following devices: 1. Bull, 2, Lakshmi Narayana, and 3. Uma Mahesvara. In one type of his coins, instead of figure legends appears on both sides. The fifth variety of coins is found with a numeral on the reverse. His copper coin has the bull emblem. The bull is understood as a representation of Siva, since bull is the mount (vahana) of Siva. The bull is usually shown with a prominent hump and moving to the left or right, with bells hanging from his neck. Crescent moon and sun are depicted above the bull. On the reverse, king's name appear in Nagari in two lines as Pratapa Devaraya.



Uma maheswara coin in gold of Devaraya I. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0879-Devaraya-parasuSiva-550.16.jpg>



Vishnu and Lakshmi coin of Devaraya I. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0879v-Devaraya-Vishnu-565.20.jpg>



Sivaparvati coin of Devaraya I. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0879.2-635.11.jpg>



Elephant walking left on the coin of Devaraya I. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0888-Devaraya-AVquart-565.04.jpg>

### **Ramachandra (1422)**

Two types of coins were issued by Ramachandra. His coins are minted in gold and copper and no silver issues are available. They weigh 3.36 gm and have a diameter of 11 mm. The elephant motif is found on one copper coin reported in the Mysore Archaeology Report for the year in 1932. The obverse has the elephant with a lifted tail moving to the left. The reverse has a vertical line in the centre, which could represent a sword. On the reverse of the coin the legend could read as Ramaraya.

### **Vijayaraya 1 (Bukka III) (1422-1426)**

Coins of Vijayaraya were minted in copper only. On the obverse of the coin has a humped bull moving to right with a dagger in front. The sun symbol is depicted on top. On the reverse is a tree with a Nagari legend, Vira Bukkaraya.

### **Devaraya II (1422-1446)**

Coins of Devaraya II were minted in all the three metals namely gold, silver and copper. The gold coins weigh from 0.85 gms to 0.82 gms, silver issues weigh from 0.2 gms to 0.02 gms, and copper coins from 5.5 gms to

2.3 gms. The size of his coins varies from 18 mm to 5 mm. His coins are generally identified on the basis of his name found



Copper jintal from Mulbagal mint.  
Devaraya II. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0885-DevarayaAE-341.52.jpg>



Silver tara of Devaraya II.  
<https://coinindia.com/MNI0897.464-179.19.jpg>



Copper coin of Devaraya II with humped bull. [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f0/Devaraya\\_II\\_coin.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f0/Devaraya_II_coin.png)



Copper jital of Devaraya II.  
[https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/vijayanagara\\_empire/37-200.jpg](https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/vijayanagara_empire/37-200.jpg);  
[https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/vijayanagara\\_empire/38-200.jpg](https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photos/vijayanagara_empire/38-200.jpg)

There are a few coins attributed to Devaraya in this series which do not have clear legend on the reverse. In one such coin is found a caparisoned elephant moving to right on the obverse. However, the reverse legend is not clear. On one type of coins, the elephant is facing the right. On the reverse is the Kannada legend reading Ummadi Devaraya is found. Below the legend is a sword. In a few coins of this type the obverse has an Elephant moving to the left and a Kannada letter 'la' appears on top. The reverse of the coin has the Kannada legend possibly reads Mana Devarayagaru.

### Vijayaraya II (1446-1447)

One type of coin is known for this ruler. It measures about 0.6 diameter and weight ranges from 24 to 29 grains (1.6 gms to 1.9 gms). From the fabric and workmanship the coin has been regarded as post Devaraya II and nearer to that of Mallikarjuna. Hence this coin has been ascribed to Vijayaraya II who ruled for a very short period. The obverse has an elephant moving to the left with uplifted trunk and tail. Discus and conch



are depicted above. All these are enclosed within a circle of dots. On the reverse, has a Kannada legend in two lines reading Vijayaraya. In between the sun and the moon is found a dagger.

In another type, the deity of Hampi, namely Pampa Devi is depicted. It is a copper coin, reported by Oruganthi Harihariah. The goddess found on the coin has been identified as Pampadevi. The female figure is seated in padmasana holding flowers in her hands. At the bottom of the female figure is found a Nagari legend Pampa. The last letter in Pampa is partially out of flan. The reverse of this coin has the name Mallikarjuna which is found within a square in three lines of Nagari script. The letters seem to be mixed up and the word Mallikarjuna is garbled.

### **Vira Narasimha (1505-1509)**

One type of coin is so far known to Vira Narasimha. He minted coins in gold and copper. These coins measure about 13 mm in diameter and weigh about 3.0 gm. On the obverse is found a very crude figure of Narasimha in sitting posture. On the reverse, the Nagari legend is found in three lines. It has been read as Sri Pratapa Narasimha. In one variant of the coin the reverse legend is found with interlineations.

### **Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529)**

Coins of Krishnadevaraya were mostly round and minted in gold and copper. The weight of gold coins varies from 7.65 gms to 1.7 gms and his copper coins weigh from 16.5 gms to 1.8 gms. The sizes of his coins vary from 22 mm to 4.5 mm. In his coins are found his name Sri Pratapa Krishnaraya in Nagari script in three lines separated by two horizontal lines on the reverse. In some of his coins the legend is in two lines. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: 1. Venkatesvara, 2. Vishnu, 3. Balakrishna, 4. Uma Mahesvara, 5. Garuda, 6. Bull, and 7 Elephant. Many coins with the Venkatesvara motif on the obverse and minted in gold are found. In the first type of coins, was depicted as standing on a lotus with a tall kirita and ornaments. The upper right hand holds the *chakra* and the upper left, the *sankha*. The lower right hand is in the abhaya-hasta (Dana mudra) and the left rests on his hip. An ornamental torana (arch) with a lion face at the centre supported by two makaras was shown. This series of coin has been considered as part of the thirty thousand coins in which the king did kanakabhisheka to lord Venkatesvara on his victories over Kondavidu and Orissa.





Balakrishna type coin of Krishnadevaraya.  
<https://coinindia.com/MNI0898-DevarayaAV-546.12.jpg>



1 copper jital of Krishnadevaraya.  
<https://en.numista.com/catalogue/photo65300.jpeg>



Garuda coin of Krishnadevaraya. [https://www.napiermuseum.org/artifacts\\_img/large/Krishna%20Devaraya%20\(1509-1530%20CE\)\\_27122017143640.jpg](https://www.napiermuseum.org/artifacts_img/large/Krishna%20Devaraya%20(1509-1530%20CE)_27122017143640.jpg)



Krishnadevaraya coin in copper with bull sun and moon. [https://2.bp.blogspot.com/--t9sb0ELrzc/UY0qjF6TTKI/AAAAAAAAAENU/zsjYfAlIc-o/s400/VNAGARA\\_KD\\_COIN.jpg](https://2.bp.blogspot.com/--t9sb0ELrzc/UY0qjF6TTKI/AAAAAAAAAENU/zsjYfAlIc-o/s400/VNAGARA_KD_COIN.jpg)

Coins with bull motif are minted in copper. On the obverse, a bull standing to the left with ornamental covering cloth on its back is seen. It has been decorated with other ornaments like bells. The sun and moon are shown above. All these are found within a circle of dots. The reverse has a two-line Kannada legend which reads Sri Krishnaraya. A conventionalized sword flanked by *sankha* and the *chakra* are also depicted. These issues are in copper and are called jintals (weight 3.38 to 2.13 and size 13 mm to 12 mm) in Andhra and Karnataka and they are more or less similar to Devaraya's bull type coins.

#### Achyutaraya (1529-1542)



Gandabherunda coin of Achyutaraya.  
<https://coinindia.com/MNI0908.671.1-Achyuta-508.01.jpg>



Gandabherunda copper coin of Achyutaraya from Madurai. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0909z-529.31.jpg>



Copper kasu of Achyutaraya with Gandabherunda motif. [https://images.vcoins.com/product\\_image/36/C/Cr7bP3XkdG56P5eFgJc42qDxQW9fE8.jpg](https://images.vcoins.com/product_image/36/C/Cr7bP3XkdG56P5eFgJc42qDxQW9fE8.jpg)



Gandabherunda coin of Achyutaraya. Eagles lifting elephants with their beaks. <https://www.classicalnumismaticgallery.com/images/products/eAUC02/large/184.jpg>



Gandabherunda coins of Achyutaraya in different metals and denominations. [https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSKO5rwu7s4Rpds3XoezXCDqkIZsWpuhvzcDUJDDi7lHoST\\_V0QIquMowiF1WQNLI-3bfQ&usqp=CAU](https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSKO5rwu7s4Rpds3XoezXCDqkIZsWpuhvzcDUJDDi7lHoST_V0QIquMowiF1WQNLI-3bfQ&usqp=CAU)

### Sadasivaraya (1542-1576)

Coins of Sadasivaraya were mostly minted in gold and copper. The weight of gold issues varies from 3.4 gms to 0.4 gms. The copper coin has a weight ranging from 16.4 gms to 1.5 gms. The size varies from 21 mm to 5 mm. His coins are found with his name Sri Pratapa Sadasivaraya rendered in Nagari and Kannada scripts on the reverse. The legend is usually in three lines separated by two horizontal lines. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices; 1. Bull, 2. Bull and Sivalinga, 3. Female deity, 4. Garuda, 5. Hanuman, 6. Horse, 7. Lakshmi narayana, 8. Mythical deity and 9. Uma- Mahesvara. In the bull type coins, the obverse has a seated bull facing left, with sun and moon depicted above. In some variants, the sun and moon symbols are not shown. The reverse of the coin has Kannada, or Nagari legends. The Kannada legend has the name

Sadasiva. The legend is separated by a line of pellets. The Nagari legend in the coin could be read as Pratapa (Sadasivaraya). These coins were reported from Tirukkoyilur and Mahabalipuram. In one type of coin a Sivalinga is depicted on the left, with a big couch and bull facing the linga. On the reverse three lines Nagari legend with interlineations and reading Sri Sadasivaraya appears.



Vishnu and Lakshmi coin type of Sadasivaraya. <https://coinindia.com/MNI0910v-Sadasiva-496.13.jpg>



Garuda coin of Sadasivaraya. <https://www.numisbids.com/sales/hosted/auctions/334/image01068.jpg>



Hanuman coin of Sadasivaraya. <https://oswal.auction/AucLots/101/57.jpg>



Sivaparvati type of Sadasivaraya. <https://media.numisbids.com/sales/hosted/noble/124/thumb04367.jpg>

In one type of coin Hanuman is depicted. The coin is from Karur. On the obverse of the coin, Hanuman is shown running to right with his tail raised over his head. On the reverse a three line legend in Nagari reading Sri Sadasivarayaru found. In another copper coin horse is depicted. On the obverse a fully caparisoned horse, galloping with an uplifted tail is found. On the reverse a three line legend in Nagari reading Sadamaha is noticed. Coins with the Uma Mahesvara type have on the obverse a seated image of Uma and Mahesvara. They are mostly gold issues and are found in numerous quantities. On the obverse Mahesvara is seated with Uma on a raised seat. Both wear kiritas and ornaments. Siva is seated in *padmasana* and holding the drum (right) and deer (left). In some coins he was shown holding a trident in his right hand. Uma is seated on the left lap of Mahesvara. On the reverse is found a Nagari legend in three lines with interlineations reading Sri Pratapa Sadasivaraya. In some coins the Nagari legend is depicted as Sri Sadasivaraya, Sadasivarayaru.



### Ramaraya (1542-1565)

Ramaraya was a regent of Sadasivaraya. He seems to have minted several issues of coins. Instead of the name of the emperor he has issued these coins in his name. Coins of Ramaraya were minted in copper and a weigh from 3.46 gms to 2.45 gms. The sizes of coins vary from 14 mm to 11 mm. Coins of Ramaraya are found with his name Rama Raya. The legend is in two lines or some times in a semi circle. On the obverse of his coins are found the following symbols and images: 1. Boar, 2. Bull, 3. Discus, 4. Elephant, 5. Elephant and bull, 6. Garuda, 7. Hanuman, 8. Horse, 9. Venkatesvara, and 10. Uncertain symbols.

### Tirumalaraya (1570-1578)

Coins of Tirumalaraya were mostly minted in gold and copper. The weight of gold coins range from 3.4 gm to 1.7 gms. His copper coins weigh from 10.2 gms to 2.5 gms. The size varies from 18 mm to 5mm. Coins of Tirumalaraya bear his name, Sri Coins with Garuda image are minted in copper. In this type, the Garuda faces a dagger, on either side of his head are placed a conch and discus. In one type two Garudas facing each other on a pedestal with a dagger in the centre. The sun and moon symbols are placed on top of the coin. On the reverse a four petalled flower is found with the Nagari legend reading Chalamaraya. Many coins with the Rama group on the obverse and minted in gold are attributed to him. In these coins, on the obverse is Rama, wearing a tall crown is seated with Sita on his left and Lakshmana standing on his right are depicted. Rama holding in his right hand *abhayamudra* and Lakshmana is in *anjali* and holding a bow on his right shoulder. On the reverse the Nagari legend in three lines reading Sri Tirumalarayalu appears. In some variants, the reverse has the Nagari legend Sri Pra Tirumalaraya. In one type of his coins is found the image of Vishnu, seated with his two consorts Sri Devi and Bhu Devi on either side. The legend is not clear on this coin, there fore attribution is doubtful.



Gold and copper coins of Tirumalaraya.

<https://coinindia.com/MNI0914.2-Tirumalaraya-508.39.jpg>;

<https://coinindia.com/MNI0915.863-Gimjee-Chalama-341.24.jpg>



Boar coin of Tirumalaraya. <https://s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/mint-news/copper-coin-of-vijaynagar-king-tirumala-deva-raya.jpg>

### **Sri Ranga-I (1572-1585)**

Coins of Sri Ranga I were mostly minted in gold and copper. The gold coins weigh from 3.4 gms to 1.7 gms, and the copper issues weigh from 10.1 gms to 2.4 gms. The size of his coins varies from 21 mm to 4 mm. Coins of Sri Ranga-I are identified with the issues bearing his name Sri Rarigaraya rendered in Nagari or Kannada scripts on the reverse. The legend is usually in three lines separated by two horizontal lines. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: 1. Bull, 2. Gandabherunda, 3. Garuda, 4. Venkatesvara and 5 Vishnu. In the bull type coins the obverse is depicted with a humped bull. It is rendered in a mixed Nagari and Kannada characters. In another type of coins the valiant bird Gandabherunda, in profile, carrying elephants in its beak and claws is depicted. On the reverse the legend in Kannada characters is found with interlineations. The legend reads as Sri Rangaraya.

Coins with Venkatesvara image are minted in gold. In one type Venkatesvara with four hands stands under an ornamental arch supported by pillars. He holds conch and discus in his upper hands. His right hand is held in *abhayahasta* while the left is in *katihasta*. On the reverse the name Sri Rangaraya appears in Nagari. In the Vishnu type coins, a standing Vishnu, holding, discus and conch is depicted. On the reverse the Telugu legend Rarigaraya is found in two lines.

### **Venkataraya -II (1586-1614)**

Coins of Venkataraya II were mostly minted in gold and copper. The gold coins weigh from 3.4 gms to 1.7 gms and the copper issues weigh from 16.2 gms to 5.8 gms. The size of his coins varies from 21 mm to 4



mm. His coin has the Venkataraya in Kannada or Nagari scripts on the reverse. The legend is usually found in two lines separated by a horizontal line. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: 1. Bull, 2. Gandabherunda, 3. ' Garuda, 4. Hanuman, 5. Hills, 6. Lakshmi narayana, 7. Venkatesvara and 8. Vishnu. In one type of his coins a left facing humped bull is found in a standing posture with sun and moon above. On the reverse has three lines in Kannada and Nagari scripts reading Sri Pra Venkataraya is noticed. Very few coins with the image of Gandabherunda are known to have minted in copper.

### Sri Ranga II (1614)

Sri Ranga II issued gold and copper coins. The weight of gold coins varies from 0.3 gms to 0.36 gms and the copper issues weigh from 1.5 gms to 1.3 gms. The size of coins varies from 12 mm to 6 mm. His coins bear the name Sri Rangarayaru written in Nagari script. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: 1. Bull, 2. Venkatesvara, 3. Vishnu, 4. Kali, and 5. Legend. Coins with bull motif are minted in gold only. On the obverse the right facing couchant bull is found with sun and moon above. On the reverse Telugu legend in two lines as Chekarayalu is found. In the second type of his coins standing Venkatesvara holding conch and discus are found. The reverse is blank. Coins with the Vishnu image has on the obverse Vishnu standing with Sridevi and Bhudevi. He holds conch and discus in his hands. The reverse is blank. In one type of his coins, is found a stylized figure, this is identified as Kali. However, the identification is doubtful. The image is similar to the one found on the Viraraya panams. On the reverse the Nagari legend Sri Rangarayaru is found. In one type of his coins a legend occupies on both sides with out any motif. On the obverse, the legend in Nagari reading Sri Ranga, and on the reverse the name Raya appears.



<http://thehobbyofkings.blogspot.in/>

Copper coin of Srirangaraya II. [https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-8\\_0u\\_jVxi\\_E/VplA1z7TVTI/AAAAAAAAQV0/woZKi0W5MY/w1200-h630-p-k-no-nu/BeFunkyColl23.jpg](https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-8_0u_jVxi_E/VplA1z7TVTI/AAAAAAAAQV0/woZKi0W5MY/w1200-h630-p-k-no-nu/BeFunkyColl23.jpg)

### Ramadevaraya (1614-1630)

### Venkatapati raya III (1630-1641)



Venkateswara type coin of Venkata III.

[https://coinindia.com/MNI0919.1-](https://coinindia.com/MNI0919.1-Venkatapiraya-565.24.jpg)

[Venkatapiraya-565.24.jpg](https://coinindia.com/MNI0919.1-Venkatapiraya-565.24.jpg)



Venkateswara in a standing posture on

Venkata III coin.

<https://coinindia.com/MNI0920-391.19.jpg>

### Srirangaraya III (1642 - 1672)

Coins of Sri Rangaraya III were minted in gold and copper. The gold coins weigh varies from 3.4 gms to 0.3 gms, and the copper coins varies from 3.9 gms to 1.3 gms. The size varies from 14 mm to 11 mm. Coins of Sri Rangaraya III, are found with his name Sri Rangaraya in mixed Kannada and Nagari scripts on the reverse. The legend is usually in three lines separated by two horizontal lines. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: - 1. Bull, 2. Fish, 3. Gandabherunda, 4. Hanuman, 5. Rama, 6. Sivalinga, 7. Venkatesvara, 8. Vishnu, 9. Dancing figure, and 10. Standing figure. In his bull type coins the bull is depicted within a rayed circle. On the reverse the mixed Kannada and Telugu legend which reads Sri Rangaraya. In some coins the bull is depicted facing to the left. In the fish type coins, the fish is found with in, a dotted circle. The fish is shown with its fins on both sides. On the reverse the mixed Kannada and [https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/280394/6/07\\_chapter4.pdf](https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/280394/6/07_chapter4.pdf)



Coin of Srirangaraya III. [https://](https://www.numisbids.com/sales/hosted/marudhar/023/image00924.jpg)

[www.numisbids.com/sales/hosted/](https://www.numisbids.com/sales/hosted/marudhar/023/image00924.jpg)

[marudhar/023/image00924.jpg](https://www.numisbids.com/sales/hosted/marudhar/023/image00924.jpg)



Coin of Srirangaraya III.

[https://cdn.marucoins.in/](https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/1003/1003006523.jpg)

[uploads/1/1003/1003006523.jpg](https://cdn.marucoins.in/uploads/1/1003/1003006523.jpg)



Copper coins of Sri Rangaraya III. <https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-vRtH3qQD2D0/VpKajR1WeII/AAAAAAAAQTW/OYQqC3i8lwY/s640/BeFunky%2BColl1.jpg>

### **Vijayanagara monetary system**

The Vijayanagara empire fulfilled its mission for three and half centuries when it patronized and nourished the ancient Hindu culture of the country. The empire disappeared. But the literature, stone & copper inscriptions, monuments and coins of that period still survive. Treasure troves of Vijayanagara coins are found throughout South India. These coins, now, are not just relics of the past. They furnish information pertaining to contemporary political, economic and cultural history.

With the foundation of the empire, the currency system in South India became well regulated. Money economy became more regular though, to some extent trade transactions were done by way of barter. The scarcity of coins in the earlier medieval South India was completely removed. Harihara I established at Hampi a separate department of mints to regulate the minting operations. There was a central mint at Hampi and smaller mints were set up at various provincial capitals and other important places such as Barakur, Mangalur, Gandikota, Penukonda, Tirupati, Gutti, Adoni, Tadapatra, Madurai and Mysore. Because of the need for mass production of coins the government allowed some select feudatories also to mint their own coins. Lakkana Dandanayaka, the governor of Tekkali Rajya under king DevarayaII, minted his own coins with the sanction from the king.

### **Monetary System**

The structure of Vijayanagara currency was carefully standardized. The monetary system was made uniform throughout the empire. Varaha,

a gold coin with an approximate weight of 3.4 grams (52 grains) was made the basic monetary unit. This coin was also called as Gadyana and Pon or Hon. To the English the coin was known as Pagoda. There were three varieties of varahas:-

1. *Ghattivaraha*
2. *Doddavaraha* and
3. *Suddhavaraha*. The Gold issues of the first two kings namely Harihara I and Bukka I were debased. In these coins the gold content was less compared to the subsequent issues of Harihara II and his successors.

| TABLE OF COINS WITH THEIR RELATIVE VALUES AND WEIGHTS OF GOLD COINS |                             |                  |               |              |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Dodda varaha  | = Dodda gadyana             | =2 varahas       | = 120 grains  |              |
| 1 gadyana   | = 1 varaha                  | = 1 pon or hon   | = pagoda      | = 52 grains  |
| 1 varaha  | = 2 pratapas                | = 52 grains      | = mada        |              |
| 1 pratapa   | = 2 katis                   | = 26 grains      | = half varaha |              |
| 1 kati  | = 13 grains                 | = quarter varaha |               |              |
| 1 varaha  | = 1- pana (each 5-6 grains) |                  |               |              |
| 1 chinna  | = one eighth varaha         | =6.5 grains      |               |              |
| 1 pana  | = 4 haga                    |                  |               | = 5-6 grains |
| 1 haga  | = 2 bele                    |                  |               | =1.5 grains  |
| 1 bele  | = 0.75 grain                |                  |               |              |

The coinage was sub-divided into several denominations. Coins were issued in gold, silver and copper. The coins were mostly circular in shape and were undated. The lowest denomination coin was a copper piece which was equal to 1/3600 of gold varaha. The coins were hammer-struck.

#### SILVER COINS

|                        |                         |        |        |                  |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|------------------|
| Tara                   | = Tairh                 | = Tare | = Tara | = One of<br>pana |
| Tara (another variety) | = One sixteenth of pana |        |        |                  |

#### COPPER COINS

|          |                     |              |  |  |
|----------|---------------------|--------------|--|--|
| Duggani  | = 2 kani or kakini  | = 250 grains |  |  |
| kani     | = 125 grains        | = 2 Ara kani |  |  |
| Jital    | = One third of Tara |              |  |  |
| Kasu     | = 30 grains         |              |  |  |
| Ara Kasu | = 15 grains         |              |  |  |

The weight standard of the gold coins was based upon the *Kalanju*, an indigenous seed, or Molucca bean (*Caesalpinia bonduc*). The *manjadi seed* (*Odenathera pavonina*) served as the radical unit of measurement. Ten manjadis were regarded as equivalent to one Kalanju seed. The seeds are popularly known as Gundumani in Tamil and Guriginja in Telugu. Metallic pieces cut to the weight of these seeds were used. At a particular time and place the actual weight might vary from the average, for the coins were liable to deterioration or debasement. Reduced weight may also be a result of the increase in the price of the metal. Assaying and weighing were necessary before a coin could be accepted in payment for materials. Assaying was a regular occupation of goldsmiths. For purposes of testing and verification, touchstones and in some cases a gold bar of the royal standard of purity were kept, and the coins were received after a process of testing. Goldsmiths also acted as money changers and bankers. They used balances which were so sensitive that they would turn by a hair of the head.



This monetary system governed the public economy of the era in its various aspects:- Taxation, Defence Expenditure, Industry and Commerce, Cost of Living - Foreign trade *et cetra*. We can have an approximate idea of Varaha's external value (foreign exchange parity) and internal value (purchasing power-price levels) by studying the following:

### **Foriegn Exchange Parity**

In the brisk foreign trade of the empire, currencies of foreign countries played a vital role. The Dinar of Egypt, the Portuguese Cruzado, Venecian Ducat and Sequin and the Florentine Florine were nearly equal to the varaha coins in weight. Example: The weight of Venecian Sequin was 52.40 grains and Duct was 53.40 grains whereas Varaha weighed 52 grains. This weight standard of varahas facilitated the foriegn trade of the empire.

### **Import of horses**

Import of horses played a prominent part in the foreign trade. The effective demand for war-horses arose to meet the requirements of cavalry which formed an important wing of the army. The strength of the cavalry may be gauged from the observations of Fernao Nuniz, a Portuguese traveller "The King (Krishnadevaraya) every year buys thirteen thousand horses of Ormus, of which he choses the best for his own stables and gives the rest to his captains... He took them dead or alive at three for a thousand *Pardaos*, and of those that died at sea they(horse-merchants) brought him the tail only, and he paid for it just as if it had been alive". The animals were shipped from Arabia, Syria, Turkey and neighbouring countries through the ports of Dufar, Bahrain and Ormus and were disembarked at Bathecala, Cannanore and the Portuguese port of Goa.

From the port-towns the animals were transported overland to Vijayanagara city where the sale and delivery were effected. The King of Portugal recieved a duty of 40 *Cruzados* on each horse and on the whole collected a revenue of 40,000 *Ducts* per annum. During the year 1516, the purchase price per horse paid to the foreign horse- traders for four consignments were first Consignment - 500 *cruzados*, second Consignment - 600 *cruzados*, third Consignment - 400 *cruzados* and fourth Consignment - 300 *cruzados*. Sassetti, a foreign traveller noted that during good years the horse trade produced a revenue in the city of Goa 120 to 150 thousand *Ducts*. These prices must be considered fairly high considering the purchasing power of the money. (Note- *Pardaos*, *Cruzados* and *Ducts*

were the denominations of Portuguese money during that period). During the reign-period of Portuguese king Dom Manuel I(1495- 1521 A.D.) of De Aviz dynasty, the following types of coins were struck at Goa Mint.

| Name of the coin      | Metal  | Weight in grams |
|-----------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Manoel or Cruzado     | gold   | 3.45            |
| Half Manoel           | gold   | 1.67            |
| Esfera                | Silver | 3.58            |
| Half Esfera or vintem | Silver | 1.79            |
| Leal                  | Copper | 11.8            |
| Half Leal             | Copper | 8.5             |
| Dinheiro              | Copper | 4.00            |
| Cepaica               | Copper | 3.1             |

From the above it can be seen that in the currency systems of both Vijayanagara and Portugal the weight standards of gold coins were identical. This facilitated the trade relations between the two countries. Vijayanagara was at the zenith of its glory and material prosperity during the reign of King Krishnadevaraya. During this time Domingos Paes, a Portuguese traveller visited the capital during 1520-1522 A.D. He chronicled in detail, among other things, the prices at which various commodities were sold at the markets of Vijayanagara. Assuming that the value of Varaha is Rs 4/- a comparison of the prices prevailing at the time of King Krishnadevaraya at Vijayanagara city and the market prices that prevailed in 1979 can be arrived at as follows.

#### Price of Commodities

| Commodity                          | Price in Krishnadevaraya's days | The amount in column(2) converted into modern currency | 1979 market prices |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| 3 chickens inside Vijayanagar city | 1 <i>Vintem</i>                 | 1 1/2 annas or 10 Naya Paise                           | Rs. 6              |

|  |                                 |                                   |         |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| 6 Partridges   | 1 <i>Vintem</i>                 | 1 1/2 annas or 10 Naya Paise      | Rs. 8   |
| 12 doves   | 1 <i>Vintem</i>                 | 1 1/2 annas or 10 Naya Paise      | Rs. 9   |
| Three bunches of grapes  | A <i>Fanam</i> or a <i>Hana</i> | 1/20 of a Varaha or 20 Naya Paise | Rs. 10  |
| 10 Pomegranates  | A <i>Fanam</i> or a <i>Hana</i> | 1/20 of a Varaha or 20 Naya Paise | Rs. 10  |
| 12 live sheep within <i>Vijayanagar</i> city   | 1/2 Viraha                      | Rs. 2                             | Rs. 120 |
| It will thus be seen that the 1979 prices of commodities are nearly sixty times the price of commodities of the time of Krishnadevaraya. |                                 |                                   |         |

| Price of Land |           |              |                          |                   |   |
|---------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---|
| S No          | Date A.D. | Place        | Area of Land             | Price             | Remarks   |
| 1.            | 1415      | Shimoga      | 1 <i>Khanduga</i>        | 15 <i>Hana</i>    | .....   |
| 2.            | 1427      | Chingleput   | 1925 <i>Kuli</i>         | 125 <i>Pagoda</i> | <i>Kuli</i> measured by the measuring rod of 32 feet. |
| 3.            | 1429      | Chingleput   | 2000 <i>Kuli</i>         | 115 <i>pagoda</i> | <i>Kuli</i> measured by the measuring rod of 32 feet. |
| 4.            | 1456      | Chingleput   | 12500 <i>Kuli</i>        | 750 <i>pagoda</i> | <i>Kuli</i> measured by the measuring rod of 48 feet. |
| 5.            | 1446      | Thirunelveli | 2 <i>Ma</i>              | 630 <i>panam</i>  | .....   |
| 6.            | 1458      | Mysore       | Land Yielding 40 Pagoda. | 400 <i>pagoda</i> | .....   |

|    |      |          |                           |                    |       |
|----|------|----------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| 7. | 1509 | Mysore   | 30 <i>Khandi</i> of land  | 120 <i>gadyana</i> | ..... |
| 8. | 1524 | Sringeri | 30 <i>Khandi</i> of land. | 120 <i>gadyana</i> | ..... |

| Rates of Interest |           |                            |                        |               |  |  |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|--|--|
| S. No             | Date A.D. | Place (noted by districts) | Rate per cent per year | Kind of Money | Monthly, yearly, half-yearly, daily etc. (as reckoned) | Remarks  |
| 1.                | 1407      | Mysore                     | 15                     | gold          | monthly  | 1 <i>bele</i> (1/2 a <i>haga</i> ) per month on 1/2 <i>gadyana</i> |
| 2.                | 1407      | Mysore                     | 15                     | gold          | monthly  | 1 <i>bele</i> (1/2 a <i>haga</i> ) per month on 1/2 <i>gadyana</i> |
| 3                 | 1464      | Travancore                 | 24                     | gold          | yearly   |  |
| 4.                | 1492      | Mysore                     | 21                     | gold          | monthly  | 2 <i>hana</i> for every 10 <i>honnu</i> .                          |
| 5.                | 1510      | Travancore                 | 9                      | gold          | yearly   | 4 1/2 <i>panam</i> per year on 50 <i>panam</i>                     |

### Taxation

There are two interesting taxation measures of the times worth noting. 1. A tax called *Mulavise*, which the merchants paid to the State, meant 1/16 th of the capital. Instead of being collected in a lumpsum, it was collected in the form of duties on commodities sold in the market. 2. Social institutions like marriage were not exempted from taxes. The tax on marriage was collected with great rigour. It affected all members of society. Sometimes the rate of tax was one *Ruka* for the bride and two for the

bridegroom. At other times the rate of two *panas* on every marriage. The parents, too, were taxed for erecting a *pandhal*, taking out the bride and bridegroom in a procession. This tax was so oppressive that many poor people remained unmarried for long years. Finding the consequences serious to the social fabric, Krishnadevaraya issued a royal edict abolishing the tax throughout the empire.

### Typology of coins

The typology of the coins is that on the obverse side the figures of Hindu Deities, animals, symbols and on the reverse side the issuing king's name or his title in Nandi Nagari or Deva Nagari or Kannada or Telugu or Tamil Script is depicted.

- The deities shown are 1. Hanuman, Garuda, Siva-Parvati, Lakshmi Narayana, Lakshmi Narasimha, Brahma-Saraswathi, Nandhi, Venkateswara and Sita Rama.
- The animals that are portrayed are bull, camel, elephant, horse, lion, varaha(boar) and the mythological double-headed eagle Gandabherunda.
- The symbols that are appearing are Sankha, Chakra, Damuru, Parasu, Ankusa and Sword (Khadga).
- The titles that are found are *Sri Nilakantha* stands for Devaraya I and *Rayagajagandaberunda* & *Gajavetekara* stands for Devaraya II. Each King chose his favourite of Dieties/Animals/Symbols as a device for his coinage.

### Commemorative coins

Besides the above mentioned regular issues commemorative coins were also struck as detailed below:-

1. To strengthen his army Devaraya II modernised his Armed Forces by induction of a Camel Corps. At that time, these animals which were native to the deserts of Rajasthan were brought into South India. To commemorate this event copper coins were issued wherein the figure of camel was shown on the obverse.
2. Krishnadevaraya offered a gift of *Navarathna Prabhavali* - *Makara* - *Thorana* to his *Istadevta* Lord Venkateswara at Thirumala on 15th October 1515. To commemorate this event a special gold coin



weighing 119.7 grains was issued known as Dodda Varaha or Double Varaha. The coin bears on the obverse a well delineated figure of Lord Venkateshwara inside a *Makara Torana* or *Prabhavali*. The *Prabhavali* is not only beautifully portrayed but also given great importance in the coin's design.

3. The same monarch in the course of his military campaign against the Gajapathi king of Kalinga (Orissa) captured in the year 1514 the important fort of Udayagiri (District Nellore). There he siezed as a war booty a beautiful image of seated Balakrishna, carried it off to his capital Hampi and there he installed the same in a newly built temple and arranged regular worship. To commemorate this historical event special gold coins were issued. On the obverse of this coins is shown an image of seated Balakrishna with the right hand holding a lump of butter. He attatched great importance to the celebration of Krishna Jayanthi festival.
4. It is well known that Timmarasu was responsible for the accession of Krishnadevaraya to the Vijayanagara throne against the wishes of Vira Narasimha. Timmarasu became the Prime Minister of Krishnadevaraya and enjoyed a special status. Krishnadevaraya performed *Kannakabishekam* to Timmarasu. To commemorate this great event special copper coins were issued in which the Kannada legend 'Krishnadeva' on the obverse and 'Timmarasaguru' on the reverse was inscribed. This is the unique coin where the name of the Emperor and his Prime Minister appear together.
5. Portrait coins (copper) were issued by King Sriranga I. The unusual design adopted make this coin unique. On the reverse is shown the figure of a standing person holding in his right hand a sword pointing downwards. The left hand is placed on the chest. Tuft of hair is made in the shape of sideknot (*Koppu*) and thrown a little to the left of the head. On the obverse the following is depicted. The *varaha* (boar) to right facing a khadga with the Sun and the Moon above. The standing person portrays a youthful figure with a regal bearing and could represent king Sriranga. The varaha was the *Raja Lanchana* of the Vijayanagara Empire. This coin is the only known, so far, portrait type coin of the Vijayanagara monarch. (<https://muttinakote.blogspot.com/2012/02/v-behaviorurldefaultvmlo.html>)

### *Key Points*

- The kingdom of Vijayanagar was founded by Harihara and Bukka, two of five brothers (surnamed Sangama) who had served in the administrations of both Kakatiya and Kampili before those kingdoms were conquered by the armies of the Delhi sultanate in the 1320s. When Kampili fell in 1327, the two brothers are believed to have been captured and taken to Delhi, where they converted to Islam. The Vijayanagara kingdom is ruled by four different dynasties. They are; Sangama, Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties and ruled for nearly three centuries.
- Numerous coins were minted and circulated in the Vijayanagar kingdom. They were mostly minted in three metals; gold, silver and copper for circulation. These coins bear various symbols on the obverse and the name of the king on the reverse. These coins were published in various publications and details were noticed in them.
- Coins of Harihara I are generally identified on the basis of the legend found on the reverse. It is usually his name Sri Harihara rendered in Kannada or Nagari scripts. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: 1. Garuda, 2. Hanuman, 3. Lakshmi, 4. Lion and 5. Vishnu.
- Bukkaraya's coins may be classified on the basis of devices found on the obverse into four types as follows: 1. Bull, 2. Elephant, 3. Garuda and 4. Hanuman. Coins of Harihara II have his name in Nagari script as Sri Pratapa Harihara, on the reverse. The legend is usually found in two levels separated by one horizontal line. On the obverse of his coins found the following devices: 1. Brahma, 2. Bull, 3. Elephant, 4. Lakshmi Narayana, 5. Uma - Mahesvara, 6. Numerals, and legend Harihara, and 7. Silver coins with legend on both sides.
- Coins of Devaraya I were mostly minted in gold, silver and copper. His gold coins weigh from 3.4 gms to 1.7 gms, silver issues from 0.20 gms to 0.2 gms and copper coins weigh from 3.4 gms to 0.7 gms. The sizes vary from 17 mm to 7 mm. His coins are found with the name Sri Pratapa Devaraya in Nagari script on the reverse. The obverses of his coins bear the following devices: 1. Bull, 2, Lakshmi Narayana, and 3. Uma Mahesvara.

- Coins of Devaraya II are generally identified on the basis of his name found on the reverse as Pratapa Devaraya in Kannada or Nagari scripts. His favourite title Gajabetakara also appears on his coins. This legend is usually found in two lines separated by a horizontal line. Many of his coins bear the elephant motif on the obverse and are distributed in Coimbatore, Karur, Chennai, Gingee, Sendamangalam, Thanjavur and Madurai in the Tamil country and Bangalore in the Karnataka.
- Coins of Krishnadevaraya were mostly round and minted in gold and copper. The weight of gold coins varies from 7.65 gms to 1.7 gms and his copper coins weigh from 16.5 gms to 1.8 gms. The sizes of his coins vary from 22 mm to 4.5 mm. In his coins are found his name Sri Pratapa Krishnaraya in Nagari script in three lines separated by two horizontal lines on the reverse. In some of his coins the legend is in two lines. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: 1. Venkatesvara, 2. Vishnu, 3. Balakrishna, 4. Uma Mahesvara. 5. Garuda, 6. Bull, and 7 Elephant.
- The Balakrishna type coins are popular ones. In these coins described by N. Ramesan, Balakrishna is depicted in a sitting posture with his knees bent and resting on a seat. His right hand holds a lump of butter while the other hand is set on the left knee. He was decorated with ear rings, girdle, necklace, bracelets, armlets and anklets. On his left are shown a *sankha* and to the right is a *chakra*.
- Coins of Achyutaraya identified with the coin bearing his name, Sri Pratapachyutaraya found in Nagari script on the reverse. The legend is usually rendered in three lines separated by two horizontal lines. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices; 1. Boar, 2. Elephant, 3. Gandabherunda, 4. Garuda and 5. Horse.
- Coins of Sadasivaraya were mostly minted in gold and copper. The weight of gold issues varies from 3.4 gms to 0.4 gms. The copper coin has a weight ranging from 16.4 gms to 1.5 gms. The size varies from 21 mm to 5 mm. His coins are found with his name Sri Pratapa Sadasivaraya rendered in Nagari and Kannada scripts on the reverse. The legend is usually in three lines separated by two horizontal lines. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices; 1. Bull, 2. Bull and Sivalinga, 3. Female deity, 4. Garuda, 5. Hanuman, 6. Horse, 7. Lakshmi narayana, 8. Mythical deity and 9. Uma-Mahesvara.

- Coins of Sri Ranga-1 are identified with the issues bearing his name Sri Rarigaraya rendered in Nagari or Kannada scripts on the reverse. Sri Ranga II issued gold and copper coins. The weight of gold coins varies from 0.3 gms to 0.36 gms and the copper issues weigh from 1.5 gms to 1.3 gms. The size of coins varies from 12 mm to 6 mm. His coins bear the name Sri Rangarayaru written in Nagari script. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: 1. Bull, 2. Venkatesvara, 3. Vishnu, 4. Kali, and 5. Legend.
- Coins of Ramadevaraya were minted in gold and copper. The weight of copper Coins varies from 6.6 gms to 3.1 gms. The size varies from 17 mm to 15mm. Ramadevaraya's coin has his name written as Sri Pratapa Ramaraya in Nagari script. The legend is usually in three lines separated by horizontal lines. On the obverse is found the following devices: 1. Discus, 2. Gandabherunda, 3. Narasimha, 4. Uma Mahesvara, and 5. Venkatesvara.
- Coins of Sri Rangaraya III, are found with his name Sri Rangaraya in mixed Kannada and Nagari scripts on the reverse. The legend is usually in three lines separated by two horizontal lines. On the obverse of his coins are found the following devices: - 1. Bull, 2. Fish, 3. Gandabherunda, 4. Hanuman, 5. Rama, 6. Sivalinga, 7. Venkatesvara, 8. Vishnu, 9. Dancing figure, and 10. Standing figure.
- The inscriptions issued by the Vijayanagara rulers in their territories mention about different denominations and terms related to their coinage such as; Varahas, gadyanas, jital, kasu, pon, etc minted in gold, silver and copper in standard sizes.

*Do you know?*

**Symbols on the Vijayanagara Coins & Significant mints in Vijayanagara kingdom**

The following are symbols or types predominantly by the rulers of Vijayanagara to daily transaction of money as well as to show the sovereignty of the kingdom, political and cultural importance as well as to prosper the economy with trade and commerce etc.

**I. Sangama dynasty:**

- (a) Hanuman and Garuda
- (b) Vrishabha (Bull) with sword
- (c) Elephant, Elephant & king
- (d) Umamaheswara, Lakshminarayana, Saraswathi-Brahma and Lakshminarasimha.

**II. Saluva dynasty:**

- (a) bull
- (b) Hanuman
- (c) lion
- (d) Garuda

**III. Tuluva dynasty:**

- (a) Lion
- (b) Venkateswara
- (c) Umamaheswara
- (d) Vrishabha (Bull)
- (e) Garuda
- (f) Balakrishna
- (g) Lakshminarayana
- (h) Gandaberunda

**IV. Aravaidu Dynasty:**

- (a) Srirama
- (b) Garuda
- (c) Sanka and chankra
- (d) The Varaha
- (e) Elephant
- (f) Bull in the couchant form
- (g) Hanuman
- (h) Venkatesha with or without consorts
- (i) Venkatesa (Gandikota)



**Prominent mints during the Vijayanagara period;**

1. Hampi
2. Barkuru
3. Mangaluru
4. Gandikota
5. Gutti
6. Adoni
7. Tadapatri
8. Mulbagal
9. Kongu
10. Gingee
11. Sendamangalam
12. Salem
13. Tanjavur
14. Tiruvannamalai
15. Madurai
16. Chandragiri
17. Padaividu
18. Rajarajapuram

**Chapter Check-up**

1. Write about the Coinage of Sangama Dynasty.
2. Discuss about the monetary system of the Vijayanagara empire.
3. Write about the Saiva and Vaishnava influence on the Vijayanagara coins.
4. What is the contribution of Aravidu dynasty for the Numismatic history of India?

**Short Answers**









1. Sadasivaraya coins
2. Srirangaraya III coins
3. Symbols and legends on the Vijayanagara coins.
4. What is a Gandabherunda legend.

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**Worksheets: Read and write the legends in the coins below:**

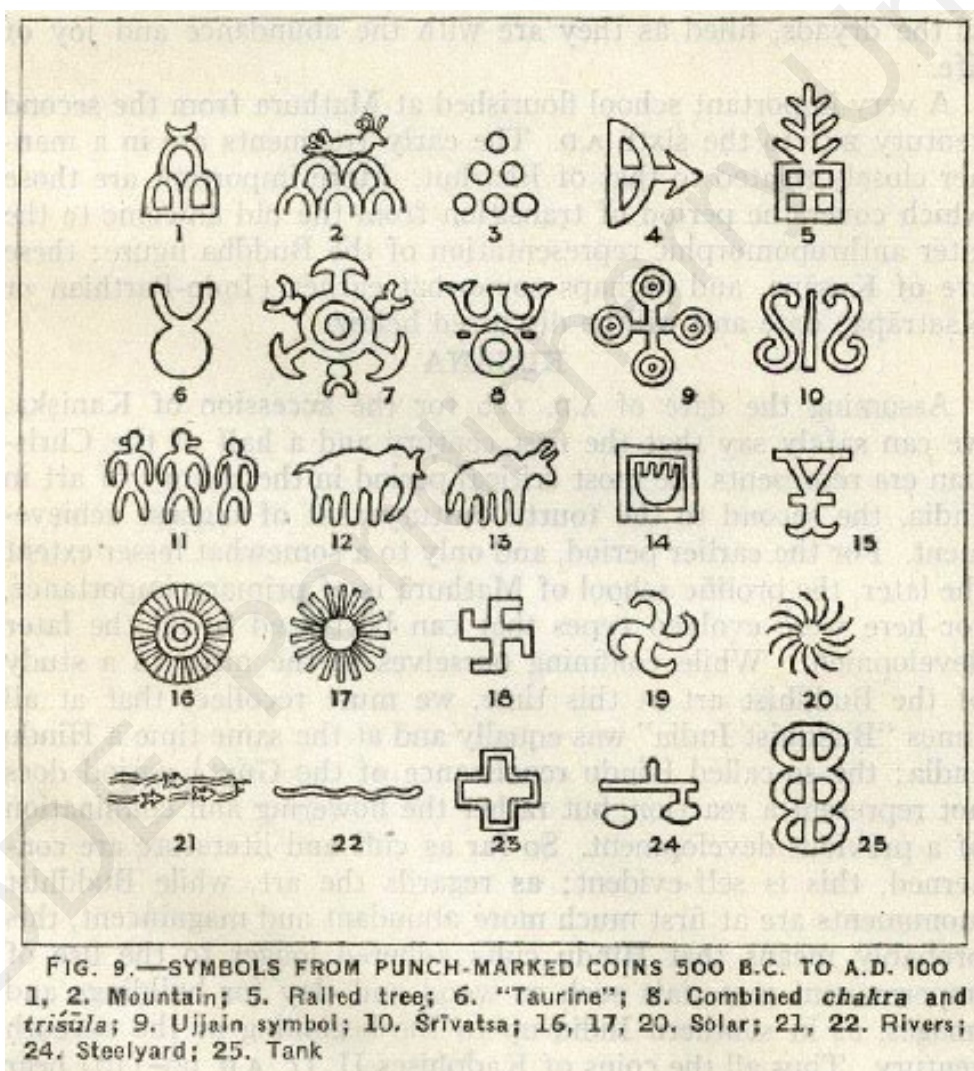


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|  <p><a href="https://preview.redd.it/earliest-unambiguous-images-of-lord-vasudev-krishna-and-v0-aek2mcfy2ti91.jpg?auto=webp&amp;s=e952ea226cc3c161c742bb51caaf0d3687ea46b6">https://preview.redd.it/earliest-unambiguous-images-of-lord-vasudev-krishna-and-v0-aek2mcfy2ti91.jpg?auto=webp&amp;s=e952ea226cc3c161c742bb51caaf0d3687ea46b6</a></p> |  <p><a href="https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8a/Kanishka_I_Greek_legend_and_Helios.jpg">https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8a/Kanishka_I_Greek_legend_and_Helios.jpg</a></p> |
|  <p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huvishka">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huvishka</a></p>   |  <p><a href="https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mahi-Kushan_4th_century.jpg">wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ec/Mahi-Kushan_4th_centur</a></p>   |





Draw & practice the following punch marked symbols



<https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Kgn80O8uERI/Tl3nyp9hj8I/AAAAAADK0/7WPto96kD48/s1600/Punch+Mark+Symbols.jpg>

Draw & practice the following;



<https://i.pinimg.com/564x/8a/c9/ce/8ac9ceca5a174f56e2a983aba1ed96f4.jpg>



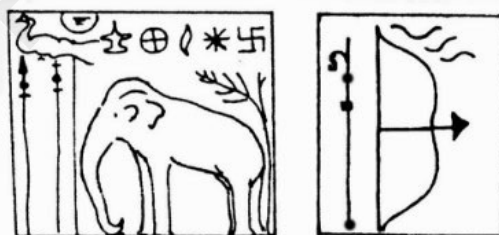
### Draw & Practice the Buddha Postures



Draw& Practice the punch marked symbols.



**Sangam Chera kingdom ( 300 BC - 250 AD )**  
**Copper -3.5 Grams ,2cm X 1.8 cm**



[https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Dp7vjv4o2gY/W1DjhvvggYRI/AAAAAAAAEHM/p1j66IrLncoJ5SMPY\\_YhZ0sl3X\\_HmL54QCLcBGAs/s1600/Untitled.png](https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Dp7vjv4o2gY/W1DjhvvggYRI/AAAAAAAAEHM/p1j66IrLncoJ5SMPY_YhZ0sl3X_HmL54QCLcBGAs/s1600/Untitled.png)



[https://1.bp.blogspot.com/- VBDc\\_jITr6s/W1Dk8fngyJI/AAAAAAAAAEHY/y37wZFL34SgBBDQXgEHJA9rQt4OFbsC\\_gCLcBGAs/s1600/Untitled.png](https://1.bp.blogspot.com/- VBDc_jITr6s/W1Dk8fngyJI/AAAAAAAAAEHY/y37wZFL34SgBBDQXgEHJA9rQt4OFbsC_gCLcBGAs/s1600/Untitled.png)

**Write the name of the ruler who issued the following coins and mention the coin type.**







[https://coinindia.com/  
Samudra-4783-531.05.jpg](https://coinindia.com/Samudra-4783-531.05.jpg)



[https://coinindia.com/Chandra-  
4814.2E-586.07.jpg](https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4814.2E-586.07.jpg)



[https://coinindia.com/Chandra-  
4823.2-B1.001.jpg](https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4823.2-B1.001.jpg)



[https://coinindia.com/Kumara-  
4842.1Bv-344.31.jpg](https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4842.1Bv-344.31.jpg)



[https://coinindia.com/Kumara-  
Rhino-R8.0-17.jpg](https://coinindia.com/Kumara-Rhino-R8.0-17.jpg)



[https://coinindia.com/Kumara-  
4843ff-344.34.jpg](https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4843ff-344.34.jpg)



[https://coinindia.com/Kumara-  
4843A-591.01.jpg](https://coinindia.com/Kumara-4843A-591.01.jpg)



[https://coinindia.com/  
Skanda-4866-421.04.jpg](https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4866-421.04.jpg)





<https://coinindia.com/Skanda-4866chhatra-591.08.jpg>



Identify the dynasty by the coin type.









