

the readings of different Vṛttikāras for पदच्छेद is the main factor of the Vṛttis.

From the above dissertation, we can plainly draw the conclusion that though all the ancient Vṛttis have been lost in toto, yet we can ascertain some opinions and actual expressions of these ancient Vṛttis from the available works. Here some principles are laid down for this purpose.

(1) In all probability, the examples given after the question किमिहोदाहरणम् or the examples considered seriously by Patañjali belong to the ancient Vṛttis.

(2) Various पदच्छेदs are also borrowed from these Vṛttis.

(3) If there are various opinions regarding the significance of any word of a Sūtra, it is quite possible that they were originally present in these Vṛttis.

(4) Similar is the conclusion in the cases where there is difference of opinion about the function of a Sūtra.

(5) Similarly it may be said that most of the variant readings were originally shown or accepted by various Vṛttikāras.

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“Rhinoceros-Slayer” Type of Coins of Kumāragupta I

(Its Historical Significance)

The recently found Bayana, or more precisely the Hullanpura, hoard¹ has revealed many new types of gold coins of the Gupta emperors. One of them is the “Rhinoceros-Slayer” type of Kumāragupta I. Only four² coins of this type have been found in this hoard and a fifth one has been acquired by the Provincial Museum, Lucknow.³ The type has been described by Dr. A. S. Altekar as follows⁴:—

Obverse—“King bare-headed, with flowing frizzled locks (*alaka*) on head, riding on a caparisoned horse to r., wearing button coat, waist-band and trousers, leaning forward attacking a rhinoceros with the sword in r. hand. Horse raises up its head, slightly frightened. Rhinoceros stands at bay, turning back its head to attack, mouth being opened. Rhinoceros is engraved realistically and beautifully, the horn on the head, two ears, l. eye, circular spots on the body, the tail and the four feet being all clear. Circular legend—(*Bhartā?*) *Khadgatratā Kumāragupta Jayatyanisam.*”

Reverse—“Within dotted border goddess Gaṅgā, not nimbate, standing to l. on an elephant-headed crocodile, holding lotus with long stalk in its trunk. R. hand of the goddess is extended, forefinger pointing to some object, not visible on the coin, l. hand hanging down by the side, empty. Hair on the head of the goddess is tied in a knot and she wears earrings, necklace and bangles. Behind the goddess is a female attendant holding in r. hand a *chatra* (umbrella) without fillet, its staff being denoted by a dotted line, her l. hand is on the waist, symbol to r. and legend on the l.—*Śrī Mahendrakhadga(b)*”

Dr. A. S. Altekar has translated⁵ the legend on the obverse as “Ever-victorious is the lord Kumāragupta, who is *Khadgatratā* protector by the sword (*Khadgena trātā*), as well as protector from the

1 Altekar, *Catalogue of the Gupta Gold Coins in the Bayana Hoard*, p. 1.

2 *Ibid.*, p. cvii.

3 *JNSI*, vol. XI, p. 9.

4 *CGGCBH.*, p. 296. Pl. XXX, 5-8.

5 *Ibid.*, p. cvii.

rhinoceros (*khadḡebhyastrātā*)" and that on the reverse⁶ as "Rhinoceros (killed by) Mahendra."

It is well known to the scholars that the Gupta coin types sometimes seem to allude to historical facts. The Tiger-Slayer type of Samudragupta may indicate⁷ the emperor's conquest in the valley of the Ganges, with its swampy and forest regions which was the abode of the royal Bengal tiger⁸ or his victory over the *Mahākāntāraka Vyāghrarāja*.⁹ Similarly Candragupta II's Lion-Slayer type may indicate his conquest over the Kathiawar region, the abode of the lion.¹⁰ The victory and authority over the Western Satraps of this region is proved from other archaeological sources. Silver coins of the *Garuḍa* type bearing the legend of *Parama-Bhāgavata* were struck most probably in Surāṣṭra (Kathiawar).¹¹ The campaign against the Satraps of western Mālava and Saurāṣṭra is apparently alluded to in the Udayagiri Cave Inscription of Vīrasena-Sāba in the passage—"He (Sāba) came here (to Eastern Mālava), accompanied by the king (Candragupta) in person, who was seeking to conquer the whole world"¹². Eastern Mālava, which had already felt the might of

6 *Ibid.*, p. cviii.

7 R. K. Mukherjee, *The Gupta Empire*, p. 35.

8 The introduction of the Goddess Gāṅgā on the reverse of the Tiger-Slayer type of Samudragupta's Coins may indicate the monarch's conquest in the valley of the Ganges, with its swampy and forest regions, which was the abode of the royal Bengal tiger. The particular area might be the south-western Bengal watered by the Ganges and still infested by the tiger, the inclusion of which within the empire of Samudragupta is indicated by the mention of Samatata, Davāka and Kāmarūpa as the bordering States in I. 22 of the Allahabad Pillar Inscription.

9 L. 19, Allahabad Stone Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta, *CI.*, vol. III, p. 6ff. Mahākāntāra denoted Vindhyan wilderness, the Eastern Gondwana whose chief is aptly called the "tiger of the forest." (R. K. Mukherjee, *GE.*, p. 21). It is also suggested that Vyāghrarāja ruled in Jeypore forest in Orissa which is referred to as *Mahā-Vana*, a synonym of Mahā-Kāntāra, in an old Inscription (*JAHRS.*, vol. I, 128; and *New History of the Indian People*, vol. VI; *Vāikāṅka-Gupta Age*, edited by R. C. Mazumdar and A. S. Altekar, p. 146). Both the forests mentioned above are infested with tigers. Naturally, a victory over the king or chief of either of these regions might have been commemorated by Samudragupta by issuing the Tiger-Slayer type. 10 *GE.*, p. 55.

11 J. Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties and of Saśānka, king of Gauda*, p. xciv.

12 *CI.*, III p. 35—"Kṛtsna-Prthvi-jayārbhena rājñaiueha sabāgatah."

Samudragupta, became the base of operations against the Śakas¹³ All these sources tend to prove that Candragupta II led a successful war against the Śakas of western Mālava and Kathiawar.¹⁴ It might be that to commemorate this victory he issued the Lion-Slayer type of coins depicting the king slaying the lion, an animal peculiar to the Kathiawar and Gujrat regions.

Thus it can be presumed with a fair degree of certainty that both Samudragupta and Candragupta II issued the Tiger-Slayer and Lion-Slayer types of coins respectively to commemorate their own conquests of certain parts of India which were finally incorporated within the empire. If this presumption be true, then the Rhinoceros-Slayer type of Kumāragupta I's coins, a unique issue in the whole range of Gupta numismatics, is also likely to allude to some historical event. It is a well-known fact that rhinoceros is an animal which is peculiar to Assam (Kāmarūpa). Hence it may be suggested that, like the Tiger-Slayer and Lion-Slayer types of Samudragupta and Candragupta II, the Rhinoceros-Slayer type of Kumāragupta I might have been issued to commemorate his conquest of *Kāmarūpa*.

It is known from the Allahabad Inscription of Samudragupta that the kings of Samatata, Davāka, Kāmarūpa and other bordering states paid obeisance to the Gupta monarch.¹⁵ As Kāmarūpa paid tribute, it can be surmised that there was an alliance, and probably a subordinate one, between the Gupta monarch and the king of Kāmarūpa. This bond of friendship was probably unbroken at the time of Candragupta II. Kālidāsa is generally ascribed to the court of Candragupta II¹⁶, and it is believed that in canto IV of his

13 H. C. Ray Chaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India* (5th ed.), p. 555.

14 Sir R. G. Bhandarkar identifies Candragupta II Vikramāditya with the traditional Vikramāditya Śakāri, "the Sun of valour, the destroyer of the Śakas." If this identification is correct then the theory regarding Candragupta's victory over the Śakas of western Mālava and Surāṣṭra and the issue of the Lion-Slayer type of coins to perpetuate this victory gets further emphasis.

15 "*Samatata-Davāka-Kāmarūpa-Nepāla-Kaṭṭrapurādi-pratyantā-nṛpaṭtibhīḥ... sarvva-kara-dānājnākārāṇa prajānāgamana paritoṣita pracanda śāsanasya...*" *CI.*, III, p. 8.

16 *Classical Age*, p. 303. It also seems to us that Candragupta II fulfils well the description of the traditional king Vikramāditya Śakāri who was the patron of Kālidāsa. The *Kumārasambhava* might refer to the birth of Kumāragupta I. In the following passage of Kālidāsa there is possibly a

Raghuvamśa, he has really narrated the conquering tour (*digvijaya*) of Samudragupta under the guise of the mythical Raghū.¹⁷ The poet mentioned in the same *Mahākāvya* that Raghū's son Aja selected the king of Kāmarūpa as his best man in his marriage with Indumatī.¹⁸ This may suggest that in the poet's time, i.e., during the reign of Candragupta II, the king of Kāmarūpa, was considered to be an important feudatory by the Gupta dignitaries and was probably regarded as an useful ally. But it seems that the political scene was changed during the reign of Kumāragupta I. The king of Kāmarūpa probably ceased to pay obeisance to the Gupta monarch and tried to assume the air of full independence by sending envoys to foreign countries. Watters has pointed out that it has been written in some Chinese text that in the year 428 A.D. an embassy from Yue-ai (Moon-loved), king of Ka-p'i-li country, arrived in China.¹⁹ This has been rightly identified by Lieut. Col. A. Wilson with the Khasia Hills region (roughly Kāmarūpa) to the west of the Kāpili river in modern Assam. The river Kāpili is mentioned in the *Kālikāpurāna* as the Kapila Gaṅgā. It is not possible to ascertain the actual name²⁰ of the king of

veiled reference to Candragupta II—*Kāmarūpaṃ nṛpaḥ santu sahasraśo'nye rājanvātīmāburanena bhūmim nakṣatratāragrabasankūlāpi jyotiṣmatī Candraya masaiva rātrih.*"

17 Compare Kālidāsa's description of Raghū's *digvijaya* in which he defeated a king called Mahendra or of Mahendra but did not annex his territory with the Allahabad Prasasti's description of Samudragupta's *digvijaya* in which he actually defeated a king of the Deccan called Mahendra but did not occupy his kingdom, and the suggested identification will be apparent.

18 *Raghuvamśa*, canto V.

19 *JRAS.*, 1898, p. 540. "Kāpīlavastu in the Buddhist Books" by Watters. The writer states that the Ka-pi-li country,—that is its capital, was described by the Chinese texts as situated on the side of a lake to the east of river and surrounded on all sides by purplish rocks. The learned writer has opined that Ka-pi-li may be the name of any district in India, but it could not have been Kapilavastu visited by Fa-Hien. For correct identification of this country-name see V. A. Smith, *EHI.*, (4th ed.), p. 316 and *JRAS.*, 1920, p. 227 ff.

20 Dr. V. A. Smith thinks that the name Yue-ai is to be interpreted as a phonetic transcript of the common Khasia U-ai to which the Chinese author assigned a meaning (moon-loved—Candrapriya) (*EHI.*, 4th ed. p. 316) in his own language. But this theory is rather fanciful and cannot be taken in its face value.

Kāmarūpa who tried to defy Kumāragupta's overlordship by sending an envoy to China as a fully independent ruler and probably also by discontinuing the payment of tributes, which his predecessors used to pay. We can merely suggest the name of Candramukhavarman, the great grandfather of Bhāskara-varman. But the wide gap of time between Kumāragupta I (415-455 A.D.) and Candra's great grandson Bhāskara-varman (c. 600-650 A.D.) prevents us from taking this identification seriously. So in the present circumstances of our knowledge the question of the identification of king Yue-ai or moon-loved (Candrapriya) should remain open.

The direct rule of the emperors already extended upto the western border of Kāmarūpa. The Allahabad inscription proves that Kāmarūpa was a bordering state of the Gupta empire. That Kumāragupta retained the Gupta rule over Bengal, at least over the north Bengal region, is amply proved by the evidences of the Dhanaidaha (113 G.E.),²¹ Baigram and Damodarpur (124 and 128 G.E.)²² copper plates.

It is known from the evidence of the *Aśvamedha* type of coins (*Aśvamedha-Mahendra*) that Kumāragupta performed a horse sacrifice.²³ As this sacrifice is generally taken, at least during this age, to be an indication of assertion of lord paramountcy by successful military operations, we may assume that Kumāragupta, like his grandfather, might have set out on a conquering tour (*digvijaya*). Dr. V. A. Smith opines that it is not likely that Kumāragupta would have indulged in this vaunt unless to some extent it is justified by successful warfare. Probably he gained certain additions to his territory.²⁴ Dr. R. G. Basak also thinks in the same way.²⁵ In order to make fresh conquests Kumāragupta could set forth with his army in the north-west, south and the east. We do not know whether Kumāragupta made any conquest in the north-west (though he had to tackle the Hūna and Mleccha problems), but we can have some idea about his achievements in two other directions. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhury suggests²⁵ that the assumption of the title *Vyāghra-balaparākrama* (displaying the strength and prowess of the tiger) on the Tiger-Slayer type of coins by Kumāra²⁶

21 *Ep. Ind.*, vol. XVII, p. 347 ff.

22 *Ibid.*, vol. XV, p. 130 ff. & 133 ff. 22. a Allan, *Loc. cit.*, p. 68

23 *EHI.*, (4th ed.), p. 316.

24 R. G. Basak, *History of North-Eastern India*, p. 47.

25 *PHAI.*, 569.

26 Allan, *Loc. Cit.*, p. 81.

may possibly indicate that he attempted to repeat the southern venture of his grandfather and penetrated into the tiger-infested forest territories beyond the Narmadā.²⁷ Expansion towards the south may also be indicated by a find of 1395 coins in the Satara district. In the east if the Gupta monarch had tried to expand, he, in all probability, first met with the troops of Kāmarūpa. In order to make his *digvijaya* complete and in order to punish the Kāmarūpa king, who, as already shown, might have tried to defy his authority and also probably tortured the people of the bordering Gupta empire by occasional raids (as is indicated by the legend *KHADGATRĀTĀ* attributed to Kumāra which may be translated as the "protector" from the rhinoceros). From the issue of the Rhinoceros-Slayer type of coins it seems that Kumāragupta attacked and conquered Kāmarūpa. Thus he fulfilled his two purposes, i.e., punishing the Kāmarūpa king for defying his authority and completion of the *digvijaya* before the horse sacrifice by defeating the same ruler who might have detained the sacrificial horse.²⁸

So this type appears to indicate a momentous episode of ancient Indian history i.e. the conquest of Kāmarūpa by Kumāragupta I. As Samudragupta and Candragupta II issued Tiger-Slayer and Lion-Slayer types respectively indicating the territories annexed, so also Kumāragupta probably issued this Rhinoceros-Slayer type of coins indicating the incorporation of Kāmarūpa (represented by the rhinoceros which is peculiar to that region) within his territory. On the reverse the goddess Gaṅgā is depicted with an umbrella, which is a mark

27 *PHAI.*, 570, Dr. A. S. Altekar, however, thinks that the coins might have been brought there by some merchant.

28 K. L. Barua (*EHK.*, p. 43) says that in the traditional accounts of Kāmarūpa a king of the dynasty of Narakāsura, named, Subāhu, is stated to have detained the sacrificial horse Vikramāditya, who invaded Kāmarūpa and put Subāhu to flight. As Candragupta II Vikramāditya in all probability did not perform any horse sacrifice and as only two imperial monarchs i.e. Samudragupta and Kumāragupta I, performed this ceremony, it seems that here Vikramāditya is to be taken as a mistake and the real king should be either Samudragupta Parākramānka or Kumāragupta I Mahendrāditya. If it happens to be Kumāragupta I then Subāhu may be identified with Yue-ai. The association of the detained horse with the killing of rhinoceros in Kumāragupta's Rhinoceros-Slayer type of coins may mean that Kumāra defeated the Kāmarūpa king during the time of 'digvijaya' just before the performance of the horse sacrifice.

of sovereignty, over her head. She is also seen pointing towards something (which is not visible on the coin) by her r. hand. These features may be taken to indicate the suzerainty of Pāṭaliputra, which is situated on the right bank of the Ganges flowing from the Himalayas, over Kāmarūpa, the region infested by the rhinoceros.²⁹ The Legend *Śrī Mahendrakhaḍga* (which can be translated as the rhinoceros (killed) by Mahendra), on the reverse makes the suggestion all the more probable.

Thus it seems that the Rhinoceros-Slayer type of coins has got a unique importance. It seems to indicate the conquest and annexation of Kāmarūpa by Kumāragupta I, a fact not yet disclosed by any other evidence. A unique issue in the Gupta monetary series, this type, apart from its numismatic importance, seems to echo an important political event in the history of the imperial Guptas, otherwise unknown³⁰.

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29 On the reverse of the Tiger-slayer type of Samudragupta's coins we find the figure of the goddess Gaṅgā with her hand pointing towards something,—a feature which can be interpreted in the same way.

30 The tremendous amount of the Gupta influence in Kāmarūpa can be guessed from the supposed prevalence of the Gupta era even in the mediaeval period and the existence of the remains of a fine Gupta temple at Dah Pārvaṭa, ascribed by Mr. S. K. Saraswati to the first half of the fifth century A.D., i.e. the reign period of Kumāragupta I.