

Who is Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 in the *Later Han Chronicle*?

Koichi Yoshiike

The *Later Han Chronicle* 後漢書 describes the ancestors of the Kushan king Kanishka and says that Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻's son, Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍, conquered India. We had regarded Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻 as Kujula Kadphises and Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 as Vima Kadphises until the Rabatak inscription was discovered in 1993. Sims-Williams and Cribb (1996) deciphered the new document and showed that Kanishka's father was Vima Kadphises, his grandfather Vima Taktu and his great-grandfather Kujula Kadphises. According to this record, Kujula Kadphises's son was Vima Taktu, not Vima Kadphises. Most of the historians nowadays identify Yan-gao-zhen with Vima Taktu, which tallies with the description of the *Later Han Chronicle* and of the Rabatak inscription. A linguistic check, however, would object to the idea. Judging from the method of phonetic transcription into Chinese characters, Yan-gao-zhen should be identified with Vima Kadphises, not with Vima Taktu.

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### 1. Introduction

The *Traditions of Western Regions* 西域傳 of the *Later Han Chronicle* (後漢書 compiled by Fan Ye 範曄 in the 5th century) describes the birth of the Kushan Empire as follows:

The Yuezhi 月氏 arrived in Sogdiana after they had been defeated by Xiongnu 匈奴, and was divided into five principalities. 100 years later, the prince of Kushan, named Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻, conquered the other four principalities and established the Kushan Empire. Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻 died at the age of more than eighty years and his son Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 succeeded him as king. He defeated India and sent a general there to govern it. Since then, the Yuezhi 月氏 has become extremely rich and strong.

初，月氏爲匈奴所滅，遂遷於大夏，分其國爲休蜜、雙靡、貴霜、盼頓、都蜜，凡五部翁侯。後百餘歲，貴霜翁侯丘就卻攻滅四翁侯，自立爲王，國號貴霜（王）。侵安息，取高附地。又滅濮達、罽賓，悉有其國。丘就卻年八十餘死，子閻膏珍代爲王。復滅天竺，置將一人監領之。月氏自此之後，最爲富盛，諸國稱之皆曰貴霜王。漢本其故號，言大月氏云。

Chavannes (1907)<sup>1)</sup> and Yamazaki (1997)<sup>2)</sup> identified Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻 with Kujula Kadphises and Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 with Vima Kadphises. There had been no objection to the idea until the Rabatak inscription was discovered in 1993. Sims-Williams and Cribb (1996) deciphered the new document and showed that Kanishka's father was Vima Kadphises; his grandfather was Vima Taktu; and his great-grandfather was Kujula Kadphises. According to this record, Kujula Kadphises's son was Vima Taktu, not Vima Kadphises. If Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 is a Chinese

transcription of Vima Taktu, we do not have to correct the description of the *Later Han Chronicle*. Judging from the way of transcribing into Chinese characters, however, Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 must be a transcription of Vima Kadphises, not of Vima Taktu, which leads us to question the correctness of the description in the *Later Han Chronicle* 後漢書.

## 2. The Rabatak inscription

Sims-Williams and Cribb (1996) published a new document written in the Bactrian language which was found in 1993 at Rabatak in Afghanistan and is commonly known as “the Rabatak inscription”. The lines 11 to 14 of the inscription are translated as follows: “and he gave orders to make (them) for these kings: for King Kujula Kadphises 【kozoylo kadphiso】 (his) great grandfather, and for King Vima Taktu 【ooēmo taktoo】 (his) grandfather, and for King Vima Kadphises 【ooēmo kadphiso】 (his) father, and also for himself, King Kanishka 【kanēško】”. This is a positive proof that Kujula Kadphises (Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻)’s son is Vima Taktu, not Vima Kadphises. Then who is Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍?

There are two answers given to the question. First, Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 is Vima Taktu. Sims-Williams and Cribb (1996) say: “the last two syllables of Yen-gao-zhen seem to represent an as yet unknown name or title of Vima I Tak [to] ” (p.102). However, the existence of “unknown name” and “unknown title” is not yet confirmed. We cannot put forward an argument based on such an uncertain supposition. Miyamoto (2013) also says that 閻膏珍 is Vima Taktu<sup>3</sup>). However, no analysis is conducted to check whether the Chinese transcription is appropriate or not. Secondly, Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 is Vima Kadphises. Odani (2003) says that 閻膏珍 is Vima Kadphises and the description of the *Later Han Chronicle* should be corrected<sup>4</sup>). However, there also is no analysis of the transcription. We should discuss the method of transcription into Chinese characters to know who is Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍.

## 3. The list of Kushan kings

This is a list of Kushan kings (Table 1). The names of kings are listed in the vertical columns: first, Kujula Kadphises; second, Vima Taktu; third, Vima Kadphises; fourth, Kanishka; and fifth, Vasudeva. The fifth generation is omitted here and Vasudeva is therefore the sixth generation. The sources are arranged horizontally: first, the Rabatak inscription and the coin legends

that were written in the Bactrian language using the Greek script; second, the coin legends written in the Gāndhārī language using the Kharoṣṭhī script; third, the coin legends written in the Greek language and script; fourth, the transcriptions in the Chinese classics written in the Chinese language and Chinese characters. The Geek and Kharoṣṭhī scripts are transliterated into the Latin script in the list below.

Table 1 The list of Kushan Kings <sup>a</sup>

sources: kings:	Bactrian Inscriptions & Coins	Gāndhārī Coins	Greek Coins	Chinese
1.Great-grandfather Kujula Kadphises AD 60-100 <sup>b</sup>	kozoylokadphiso *Rabatak inscription	kujulakasasa <sup>e</sup> kuyulakaphsasa <sup>f</sup> *-asa <gen.>	kozoylokadphizoy <sup>j</sup> *-oy <gen.> kozolakadaphes <sup>k</sup>	丘就卻 *後漢書
2.Grandfather Vima Taktu AD 100-120	ooēmotaktoo *restoration <sup>c</sup>	vema (not clear) tak * * <sup>g</sup>	ooēmotakdooy <sup>l</sup> *-oy <gen.>	閻膏珍 *後漢書
3.Father Vima Kadphises AD 120-143	ooēmokadphiso *Rabatak inscription	víma or véma <sup>h</sup> kathpiśasa <sup>i</sup> *-asa<gen.>	ooēmokadphisēs <sup>m</sup>	閻膏珍 *後漢書
4. The king Kanishka AD 143-171	kanēške *Rabatak inscription *-e <obl.>	-----	kanēškoy <sup>n</sup> *-oy <gen.>	迦膩色 迦 <sup>o</sup> *大唐西域記
6. King of after ages Vasudeva AD 203-241	bazodēo *coin <sup>d</sup>	-----	-----	波調 *三国志 魏書 <sup>p</sup>

Notes:

a. This list is based on the Kushan Kings lists of Sims-Williams and Cribb (1996) and Yoshiike (2018) and revised.

b. The years of reign are based on Odani (2003:212).

c. This form is restored from the Rabatak inscription and the Dasht-e Nawur inscription.

• The Rabatak inscription (Sims-Williams 2008)



OOH M O \* A K [T] OO ɓ A O  
 ooēmo\*ak[t]oo (Vima Taktu) shao (king)

• The Dasht-e Nawur inscription (Sims-Williams and Cribb 1996)



OOH M O T A K [T] OO  
 ooēmotak[t]oo (Vima Taktu)

- d. See Göbl (1984:28).
- e. See Mitchiner(2004:597)No.1814.
- f. See Jongeward and Cribb with Donovan (2015) No.109, 112.
- g. See Sims-Williams and Cribb (1996:138-142) and Mitchiner(2004:605).
- h. **7** va **2** vá (Glass 2000:97-98). ‘ v ’ is [v], ‘ vá ’ is [w]. See section 4.2.1 for a detailed discussion.
- i. See Watanabe (1973:56) and Göbl (1984).
- j. See Mitchiner (2004:597): No.1811,1814.
- k. See Jongeward and Cribb with Donovan (2015) No.105, 107.
- l. See Bopearachchi (2007).
- m. See Watanabe (1973:56).
- n. See Göbl (1984).
- o. See *DaTang xiyuji guben sanzong* 大唐西域記 古本三種 (1981).
- p. Sanguozhi Weishu 三国志·魏書, Dahe san nian 大和三年 (229), “大月氏王波調遣使奉獻、以調爲親魏大月氏王。 (Bodiao 波調, the king of Dayuezhi 大月氏, sent an envoy to pay tribute to Wei 魏 and thus Wei 魏 gave him the title of Qin-Wei- Dayuezhi-wang.)”.

The kings of the first three generations have long spelled names which are written without a space in the inscriptions and coins. However, the names are easily divided into two parts because they share common parts.

Kozoylo / kadphiso, ooēmo / taktoo, ooēmo / kadphiso

Chinese transcribers must have paid attention to this structure when they transcribed the names into Chinese characters.

#### 4. Examination of the transcriptions

Probably, two transcriptions 丘就卻 and 闐膏珍 were made in the Later

Han era, and Fan Ye 範曄 reused those when he compiled the *Later Han Chronicle*. Thus we should refer to the Later Han Chinese sound of Schuessler (2009) and Coblin (1983) and to the middle Chinese of Pulleyblank (1991) as needed. The data of Coblin (1983) is mainly based on the Buddhist transcription of the Later Han era.

#### 4.1 Comparison between Kujula Kadphises and 丘就卻

	Kujula Kadphises				
Bactrian	ko	zoy	lo	kad	phiso
Greek	ko	zoy	lo	kad	phizoy
	ko	zo	la	kada	phes
Gāndhārī	ku	ju	la	ka	sasa
	ku	yu	la	ka	phsasa
Transcription	丘	就	----	卻	----
Schuessler (2009)	k <sup>h</sup> u	dziu		k <sup>h</sup> iak	

The first syllables of the two parts (‘ko’ and ‘kad’) are clearly transcribed, whereas the second and third syllables are not necessarily transcribed. It is natural to transcribe the beginning of a word. There is no problem with the phonetic correspondence between “丘就卻” and “kozoy(lo) kad(phiso)” or “Kuju(la) Ka(sasa)”.

#### 4.2.1 Comparison between Vima (of Vima Taktu and of Vima Kadphises) and 閻

	Vima	References
Bactrian, Greek	ooēmo[we:mo]	Nakamura (2018)
Gāndhārī	víma[wima] or véma[wema]	Burrow (1937) and Glass (2000)
Transcription	閻	<i>Later Han Chronicle</i>
Later Han Chinese sound	jam, wam?	Schuessler (2009)
	zjam	Coblin (1983)

Nakamura (2018) says that ‘oo’ of ‘ooēmo’ is a newly created spelling to represent [w]. The Bactrian language had a sound [w]<sup>5)</sup> but the Greek script did not have a letter for [w], thus [w] was spelled with a double ‘o’. In the Kharoṣṭhī script, the shape of v̄ is different from that of the normal v. Burrow (1937) says: “Besides v there is a letter transliterated v̄ which was

probably a *w*. It was characteristic of the native language which had no *v*. It occurs commonly in native names: *Ūapika*, *Ūarpa*, *Ūūgaca*, *Ūua*, and in the title *vasu*” (p.11.§29). Glass (2000) says: “This letter was probably pronounced *w*, since it is found in the name *Ūima Kadphises*, which occurs in Greek transliterations as ΟΟΗΜΟ ΚΑΔΦΙΧΗΚ”. Schuessler (2009) shows [wam] as a Later Han Chinese form, but this sound [wam] depends on the correspondence of 閻 and *vima* that we discuss now. Except for the transcription, there is no evidence for [wam], and thus we should delete [wam]. We will only examine the correspondence of [we:mo] [wima] [wema] and 閻 [jam] [zjam]. About the onset [w], the correspondence is incomplete, but we can explain the reason why [w] was omitted in the Chinese transcription.

#### 4.2.2 The list of reconstructions of the Later Han Chinese and the Middle Chinese

	Later Han Chinese	Middle Chinese	
Schuessler (2009)	炎 (喻三) wam 閻 (喻四) jam, <del>wam?</del>	炎 (喻三) jām 閻 (喻四) jiām	
Pullyblank (1991)		Early Middle Chinese	Late Middle Chinese
		炎 (喻三) wiam 閻 (喻四) jiam	炎 (喻三) iam 閻 (喻四) jiam
Coblin (1983)	炎 (喻三) zjam ※ Skt.yāma ←炎 閻 (喻四) zjam ※ Skt.jambudvīpa ←閻浮利		

Pullyblank (1991) reconstructs 炎 (喻三)<sup>6)</sup> [wiam] in the Early Middle Chinese, and Schuessler (2009) reconstructs 炎 (喻三) [wam] in Later Han Chinese. However, according to the traditional interpretation, the Middle Chinese did not have a syllable [w-\*m] (initial or medial w + vowel + final m)<sup>7)</sup>. There is no established theory about the Later Han Chinese. Coblin (1983) shows 炎 (喻三) zjam (lips are not rounded) referring to the transcription in the Later Han Chinese. If there was a syllable [wiam] or [wam] in Later Han Chinese, 炎 should have been used for [we:mo]

[wima][wema]. On the other hand, if the Later Han Chinese did not have a syllable [wiam] or [wam], the transcriber had no choice but to use 閻 [jam] [ʒjam] to transcribe [we:mo] or [wima].

#### 4.3 Comparison between Vima Taktu and 閻膏珍

	Vima Taktu		
Bactrian	ooēmo	ta	-k too
Greek	ooēmo	ta	-k dooy
Gāndhārī	vema (not clear)	ta	-k [*]
Transcription	閻	----	膏 珍
Schuessler (2009)	jam		kau ʈin

With regard to the correspondence of 閻膏珍 and Vima Taktu, we can find two defects in transcription. First, the beginning of the second part (‘ta’) is not transcribed. Secondly, the sound quality of ‘too’ (lips are rounded) is different from that of 珍 [ʈin] (lips are not rounded). If 閻膏珍 was a transcription of Vima Taktu, it would be a defective and imperfect one.

#### 4.4 Comparison between Vima Kadphises and 閻膏珍

	Vima Kadphises		
Bactrian	ooēmo	ka	-d phiso
Greek	ooēmo	ka	-d phisēs
Gāndhārī	víma	ka	-th piśasa
Transcription	閻	膏 珍	----
Schuessler (2009)	jam	kau	ʈin

This correspondence has two small defects, however we can explain the reason why the defects were caused. First, why was ‘-d’ transcribed as 珍 [ʈin] having a closed vowel [i]? Because the ‘-d’ was affected by i [i] of ‘phiso (phisēs)’ and came to sound like [di]. Secondly, why was ‘-d’ transcribed as 珍 [ʈin] having a final [-n]? Final [-n] is unnecessary for transcription. The reason why 珍 was chosen is that 珍 has a good meaning. The meaning of 珍 is “treasure”, and the meaning of 膏 is “abundant” or “of the blessing”. 膏珍, therefore, means “abundant treasure” or “treasure of the blessing”. It is said that Vima Kadphises minted a large quantity of gold coins first in the Kushan Empire<sup>8</sup>, thus 膏珍 (abundant treasure) is a suitable name for him. 閻 (the meaning is “gateway”) is



often used as a family name in Chinese. Phonetically and semantically, 閻膏珍 must be a transcription of Vima Kadphises.

## 5. Conclusion

The *Later Han Chronicle* 後漢書 says that Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻's son, Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍, conquered India. According to the Rabatak inscription, Kujula Kadphises (丘就卻)'s son was Vima Taktu, not Vima Kadphises. Our analysis of the transcription confirmed that Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 was Vima Kadphises, not Vima Taktu. All things considered, the description of the *Later Han Chronicle* 後漢書 that Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻's son is Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 is a mistake. Then, who conquered India? Vima Taktu (=Kujula's son) or Vima Kadphises (=閻膏珍)? The issue is still pending. It will be the work of historians, not of linguists.

## Notes

- 1) Chavannes (1907) :“Plus de cent ans après cela, le hi-heou (yabgou) de Kouei-chouang (Kouchan) nommé K'ieou-tsieou-k'io 丘就卻 (Kozoulokadphisês) attaqua et vainquit les quatre autres hi-heou (yabgou) ; il se nomma lui-même roi ; le nom de son royaume fut Kouei-chouang (Kouchan). ” (pp.190-191). And, “K'ieou-tsieou-k'io mourul âgé de plus de quatre-vingt ans. Son fils Yen-kao-tchen 閻膏珍 (Oêmokadphisês) devint roi à sa place; à son tour, il conquit le T'ien-tchou 天竺 (Inde) et y établit un chef pour l'administrer.”(p.192).
- 2) Yamazaki (1997): “クジュラはバクトリア地方を平定すると、南下してガンダーラ地方を征服した。クジュラが八十余歳で死ぬと、その子のヴィマ・カドフィセスが王位を継いだ (After Kujula conquered Bactria, he went south and conquered Gandhara. When Kujura died at more than eighty, his son, Vima Kadphises, took over the throne.) ” (p.187).
- 3) “『後漢書』には閻膏珍が丘就卻の子であると記されているので、丘就卻をクジュラ・カドフィセスと考える以上、閻膏珍はヴィマ・タクトゥを指すと考えるのが自然であろう。(The *Later Han Chronicle* 後漢書 says that Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻's son is Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍. Since Qiu-jiu-que 丘就卻 is Kujula Kadphises, it is natural to think that Yan-gao-zhen 閻膏珍 is Vima Taktu.) ” (p.60).
- 4) “この碑文はクシャン族自らが残した貴重な記録を含んでおり、そのなかにカニシカ王自身が父をヴィマ・カドフィセス、祖父をヴィマ・タクト、曾祖父を

クジュラ・カドフィセスと呼んでいる部分がある。『後漢書』の伝えるクシャーン王の系譜に補正の必要が出てきているのである。(This inscription contains valuable descriptions written by the Kushans themselves. In the inscription, the king Kanishka himself calls his father Vima Kadphises, his grandfather Vima Taktu and his great-grandfather Kujula Kadphises. Thus we have to correct the genealogy of the Kushan kings mentioned in the *Later Han Chronicle*.) ” (pp. 211-213).

5) Sims-Williams (1988) says: “Ambiguities remain: Thus *i* (*iota*) represents both *i*, *ī*, and *y*; *o* (*omicron*) both *u*, *ū*, and *w*; *a* (*alpha*) both *a* and *ā*.”(p.347). Gholami (2014)says: “Bactrian preserves the \*w in both initial and internal positions: \*w > w Examples: οαζ- “to use” < \*waza-, οασαρο “market” < \*wahā-čarana-, ταιοαο “fine” < \*tāwāna-”(p.40). \*w is Proto-Iranian Sonorant.

6) 喻三 and 喻四 are the technical terms of the Middle Chinese. 喻 Yu is an initial consonant, and 三 and 四 are Grade 3 and Grade 4 in the rhyme table.

7) See Hirayama (1967:156).

8) See Yamazaki, Gen'ichi 山崎元一 et al. (2001:30).

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K.Yoshiike

Emeritus Professor, Aichi Prefectural University

(よしいけ こういち・委嘱研究員, 愛知県立大学名誉教授)