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Kujula Kadphises and His Title Kushan Yavuga

Joe Cribb

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The title 翁侯 or 翯侯 *xihou* applied to Kujula Kadphises, in Chinese textual sources, and, on the coins of Kujula Kadphises in the forms *yavuga*, *yaüa* or *yaü* in Gandhari Prakrit and εἰα[ι]ος (*ēia[i]os*) or ζαοος (*zaos*) in Greek, is normally rendered in modern scholarship as “yabgu,” from the later Turkish version of the title. This link with the later Turkish term has led some to understand the Kushan title from its Turkish usage as “tribal chief” (e.g. Cribb 1985, p. 146; Salomon 1996, pp. 440–441; Srinivasan 2007, p. 6; Liu 2001, p. 267). In the Turkish context it is used both for the level of authority immediately below the royal title *qagan* and as a title for the chief of a tribal group. In the Chinese texts relating to the Kushan *xihou* Kujula Kadphises and other individuals among Inner Asian peoples, it appears to have the former meaning. And it appears to have the same meaning in Kujula Kadphises coin inscriptions.

There has been frequent debate in academic research about the origins of the title, with two widely held positions predominating, one identifying it as a Chinese title, the other as a Central Asian title transcribed into Chinese. Recent publications have outlined the debate, especially the entry for the term *jabguya* in *Encyclopedia Iranica* (Sims-Williams and de la Vaissière 2012), which presents the main arguments on both sides and concludes that the term is a Chinese transcription of a title used by the Wusun and Yuezhi peoples of Inner Asia. One of the authors of this note had previously proposed that the term was a Chinese title meaning “allied prince” (Sims-Williams 2002, pp. 229–230). The same position is proposed in his commentary on the Western Regions section of the *Hou Han Shu* by John Hill (Hill 2009, p. 588).

This paper sets out to examine the use of the term in the Chinese chronicles of the period of the Kushan *xihou* and in coin and stone inscriptions of Kujula Kadphises to illustrate the function of

this title for him (*Hou Han Shu* 118, 13; Hill 2009, pp. 28–29) and interrogate the contextual evidence from these sources for the meaning of this title and its likely origins.

USE OF *XIHOU* IN CHINESE SOURCES

The title *xihou* was used in the Chinese chronicles to refer to the secondary rank of authority in three Central Asian states, the Wusun, Kangju and Da Yuezhi, and to two high nobles defecting to the Chinese from the Xiongnu.

WUSUN XIHOUS

The earliest reference to a *xihou* appears to be as the title of a high noble of the Wusun people (*Han Shu*, 61.4B, Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, p. 215). The Bujiu *xihou*, as the guardian of the infant son of Nandoumi, ruler (*kunmo* or *kunmi*) of the Wusun people, rescued the child when the Da Yuezhi attacked and killed his father. Later the child became the Wusun ruler. The story was reported as recounted by the Chinese envoy Zhang Qian who had heard it while he was being held by the Xiongnu, c. 138–128 BC, and when the son of Nandoumi was already an old man. However, Pulleyblank has pointed out the inauthentic nature of the details of the narrative about the Wusun Bujiu *xihou* (Pulleyblank 1970, pp. 156–159), so it is possible that this title could have been applied to this narrative in a retrospective manner, i.e., by a Chinese narrator who applied the term to a Wusun noble because of its later use by the Wusun.

The later use of this title by the Wusun is more certain, as the *Han Shu* account of this people (96B.1A–11B [Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 143–162]) contains numerous other references to high Wusun nobles by this title and apparently indicates there were three such nobles in the Wusun state (pp. 143–144). Specific references to individual *xihou* include one to the Ruohu *xihou*, who married the younger daughter of the senior Wusun ruler Wengguimi and his Chinese princess wife in the mid-first century BC (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, p. 150). The same Wusun ruler is also recorded as taking charge of the *xihous'* cavalry c. 71 BC (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, p. 151) in a joint action with the Chinese against the Xiongnu. After his death, his son Wujiutu is recorded as overthrowing a rival and becoming senior ruler of the Wusun with the aid of his father's *xihous* in c. 50 BC (p. 156), but he failed to restore to these *xihous* their subjects, so the Chinese intervened (p. 157). Some time between 33 and

11 BC, Cilimi, Wujiutu’s grandson, became the senior Wusun ruler, and all the *xihous* are reported as submitting to him (p. 159). One of his *xihous*, Nanxi, is described as killing Cilimi’s rival, the lesser ruler (p. 160), an action recognized by the Chinese as worthy of reward (p. 161). In 5 BC the Beiyuanzhi *xihou*, a concubine’s son of the lesser Wusun ruler, is reported to have attacked the Xiongnu (*Han Shu* 94B.11b) and in 1 BC to have been given the title *guiyihou* (restoration of righteousness noble) (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 161–162).

KANGJU XIHOUS

The Kangju are described by the *Han Shu* as having five lesser kings (*Han Shu* 96A.35B–36A; Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 130–131). Each is named after the town (城) where his court was located. Attempts have been made to equate these kings and towns with the main centers of Sogdh (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 130–131; Yu 2014, pp. 180). Elsewhere in the *Han Shu* a different structure of the Kangju state is described in which the Kangju king is noted as holding council c. 44 BC with his *xihous*. He consulted with them about allying with the Xiongnu as a protection from the Wusun (*Han Shu*, 94B.8; Pulleyblank 1966, p. 28). These *xihous* seem to occupy the role of immediate subordinates of the Kangju king, so it seems likely that they are the same princes of the Kangju state referred to as the five lesser kings. In the *Qian Han Ji* they are also referred to as *xihous*. The context of this is the attack by the Chinese army on the Xiongnu who had taken control of Kangju (*Qian Han Ji* 23.2). The text says that the Chinese destroyed the five main towns (城) and captured the banners of the *xihous* in 36 BC. If the five lesser kings were ruling in the ancient centers of Sogdh (e.g., Chach, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khwarezm, Kesh), then it seems more problematic to identify them with the *xihous* who were defeated and had their five towns destroyed by the Chinese army. An alternative to such an analysis would be to question the linkage of the five lesser kings with the Sogdh city states.

DA YUEZHI XIHOUS

The five *xihous* of the Da Yuezhi are well known to modern scholars and include the Kushan (*Guishuang*) *xihou* (*Han Shu* 96A.32A–33A; Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 121–123; Falk 2015: 69–78). Recently discovered wooden tally records, found at Xuanquan near Dunhuang, refer to two of these *xihous*, the Shuangmi *xihou* and the Xiumi *xihou*, as envoys from them to the Chinese court who had

passed through this relay post in 43 and 37 BC respectively. These documents provide contemporary evidence of the correct Chinese version of this title, matching that surviving in the chronicles (Zhang Defang 2004, pp. 136–137; Grenet 2006). The meaning of the names of the five *xihou* is not fully clear, but the Shuangmi *xihou* and the Dumi *xihou* (or Gaofu *xihou*) seem to derive their names from the territory they controlled as their seat of residence has the same name. The significance of the names of the other three *xihou* is not clear. Likewise the names attached to the titles of the Wusun *xihou* give no indication of their meaning. The Kangju *xihou* do not have any specific names. So the meaning of Kushan could be individual to the family of the *xihou* or relate to a place name that is no longer known. It was clearly important to Kujula Kadphises as he retained the title Kushan *xihou* after he was also using the title “king” in his southern conquests, and even used the name Kushan as his own personal name. It was also important to his descendants even after the title *xihou* was no longer used (Table 4).

The *Han Shu* (96A. 15A) describes the establishment of five *xihou* to rule Da Xia (Tokharistan) on behalf of the Da Yuezhi king. The five *xihou* were Xiumi 休密, Shuangmi 雙靡, Guishuang 貴霜, Xidun 駙頓 and Gaofu 高附. It is thought that this information was added to the chronicle on the basis of a report by Ban Chao c. AD 74–75 (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, p. 121, n. 288), but it does not refer to events that are in the *Hou Han Shu* and that took place before AD 74–75, so is probably an earlier report based on information from the Protector General of the western regions, an office active in the region from 59 BC until AD 16 (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 10–11). The wooden tallies from Xuanquan (Zhang Defang 2004, pp. 136–137), show the Da Yuezhi *xihou* (Shuangmi *xihou* in 43 BC and Xiumi *xihou* in 37 BC) sending envoys to China during the first century BC, so the author of the *Han Shu* would have had ample evidence of the *xihou* of the Da Yuezhi (Grenet 2006, p. 339; Falk 2015, pp. 68–69). The list of *xihou* in the *Hou Hanshu* (Hill 2009, pp. 28–29) is different in one respect from that in the *Han Shu*, substituting Dumi 都密 for Gaofu, and commenting that the *Han Shu* was mistaken in this respect.

The ethnicity and location of the five Da Yuezhi *xihou* has been much debated. The evidence of the use of the *xihou* title among the Wusun suggests that it related to members of the immediate court of the king, even direct relatives of the king, so one would expect the Da Yuezhi holders of this title to be members of the Da Yuezhi elite, rather than local princes who had been conquered by the

Da Yuezhi, as has been suggested (Yu 2014, pp. 387–389). The locations of the five *xihous* in Daxia/Tokharistan has been based on attempts to match the place names in the Chinese chronicles with place names mentioned in non-Chinese sources. The *Han Shu* (96A. 15B) also gives distances from the seat of the Chinese Protector General and from the Yang frontier post, measured in Chinese miles (*li*). These distances do not give a solution to the location of the *xihous*, as exact conversions of the distances do not work when laid out on a map, but they do show some relative relationships between them. Various solutions have been proposed and discussed (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 121–123; Hill 2009, pp. 320–345), but the most recent attempt to find a solution, by Grenet, offers the most convincing use of the place names mentioned, as its solution also fits the relative positions of their locations as given in the Chinese sources. Grenet places all the *xihou* north of the river Oxus/Amu Darya, Xiumi, nearest to the Protector General (2841 *li*), in the upper Vakhsh valley (Karategin); Shuangmi, next nearest to the Protector General (3741 *li*), in the upper Kafirnigan valley (Hisar); Guishuang, further from the Protector General (5940 *li*), in the lower Vakhsh valley (Takht-i Sangin); Xidun, a similar distance from the Protector General (5962 *li*), in the lower Kafirnigan valley; and Gaofu/Dumi, furthest from the Protector General (6041 *li*) at the juncture of the Surkhandaria valley and the river Oxus/Amu Darya (Termez). Grenet offers a coherent explanation of the confusion between the chronicles over Dumi and Gaofu (Grenet 2006; see also Falk 2015, pp. 75–78). The locations also correspond with the distribution of coinage in the reign of Kujula Kadphises and before (Staviskii 1986, pp. 127–140, fig. 12; information supplemented by Aleksey Gorin’s maps in Falk 2015, pp. 75–77, figs. 2–4). The “Heraus” coinage issued by Kujula Kadphises circulated primarily in the Vakhsh valley where his original domain was located. His issues of copper Heliocles imitations copied the earlier silver imitations circulating in the Dumi *xihou*’s territory around Termez. Silver imitation Eucratides were current in the territory of the other three *xihous* in the upper and lower Kafirnigan valley.

The locations of the *xihous* as set out by Grenet makes it clear that they occupy the same territory as the *Han Shu* indicates for the location of the Da Yuezhi king’s court, north of the river Oxus/Amu Daya (犄水 *guishui*). This offers further evidence that the five *xihous*, including the Kushan *xihou*, were part of the Da Yuezhi elite rather than local princes.

According to the *Hou Han Shu* (Hill 2009, pp. 28–29) more than a hundred years after the five

xihou had been given charge of Tokharistan, Kujula Kadphises (丘就卻 *qiujiquè*), the Guishuang *xihou*, overthrew the other four *xihou* and established himself as sole ruler in Tokharistan. This action made him leader of the former Da Yuezhi state, but it seems likely that the title Da Yuezhi king had already become obsolete, as there is no mention of this title since the *Han Shu*. The *Hou Han Shu* makes it clear that Kujula Kadphises and his son were not identified by their neighbors as Da Yuezhi, but as Kushan kings, even though the Chinese continued to refer to them as Da Yuezhi kings. The rise of Kujula Kadphises appears to have taken place c. AD 50 (Cribb 2018), therefore it seems likely that the establishment of the five *xihou*, more than a hundred years earlier, took place before c. 50 BC, i.e., well before *xihou* were sending their own envoys to China in 43 and 37 BC (Zhang Defang 2004, pp. 136–137; Falk 2015, p. 69). Falk suggests that their establishment could have taken place as early as c. 80 BC (2015, p. 69).

XIONGNU *XIHOUS*

The use of the *xihou* title by Xiongnu nobles has a different nature to that of the nobles bearing it among the other Inner Asian nomad peoples. It was only used by Xiongnu nobles who had broken with their Xiongnu overlord and deserted to the Chinese. The first mention of *xihou* among the Xiongnu is of *xihou* Handan, who was one of a group of Xiongnu nobles who defected and were given Chinese noble titles in 147 BC (*Han Shu* 17.2; *Shiji* 19.5). His elevation to *xihou* was ended in 131 BC. In 127 BC *xihou* Zhao Xin, a former king of the Hu people (*Shiji* 110.35; Watson 1971, II, p. 180) and a former high minister of the Xiongnu (*Shiji* 111.7; p. 214), is also reported as a defector to the Chinese who was appointed by them as *xihou*. He then served as a general in the Chinese army until he was defeated in 123 BC by the Xiongnu and defected back to them. Here the title is not used within the nomad state, but by the Chinese, for individuals who have left their nomad group to side with the Chinese. The case of Handan suggests that *xihou* was used to indicate a feudal honor bestowed by the Chinese. Alongside the *xihou* Handan, the five other defectors were also given noble titles that also appear to indicate the name of the fiefdoms they had bestowed on them: 桓侯 *huanhou* (or 垣侯 *yuanhou*, *Shiji* 19.5), 遼侯 *qihou*, 容城攬侯 *rongchengxiehou*, 易侯 *yihou* and 范陽靖侯 *fanyangjinghou*. The simplest explanation of the *xihou* title in this context therefore appears to represent the bestowal of a

fiefdom called *xi*, rather than a specific Central Asian title. Perhaps the same should apply to the bestowal of this title on Zhao Xin.

One cannot, however, completely rule out the possibility that the title *xihou* bestowed on both these Xiongnu nobles somehow relates to the context of its use for other nomad nobles. The case of another defector from the Xiongnu does suggest that the Chinese authorities bestowed the title *hou* as a reward with a political significance rather than a feudal one. In 59 BC the Xiongnu commander in the western regions, King Rizhu rebelled against the Xiongnu leader and deserted to the Chinese (*Han Shu* 96A. 3A; Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, p. 78; Yu 2014, p. 99), handing control of the western regions to the Chinese. He was rewarded with the title 歸德侯 *guidehou* (the allegiance to imperial authority noble).

THE CHINESE TITLE *HOU* IN INNER ASIA

In China the title “noble” (*hou*) was normally linked with a place name, implying a feudal role whereby the recipient of such a title received the rights and authority over a specific district, such as collecting its taxes. The bestowal of noble (*hou*) titles in Inner Asia had a different function, and it was only attached to the particular place where they already had a role as a high noble under the local king. The *hou* titles bestowed by the Chinese on Inner Asian nobles mentioned in the *Han Shu* (Table 1) gave these nobles an honorific status and mostly refer to the role of these nobles in relation to Xiongnu predation, such as 輔國侯 *fuguo* (protect the kingdom noble), 擊胡侯 *jihuhou* (attack the nomads noble) and 安國侯 *anguo* (peace for the kingdom noble). In the *Hou Han Shu* the use of such titles is also recorded, with additional titles mentioned, such the 守節侯 *shoujie* (protect the law noble), bestowed by the Chinese on the loyal son of the assassinated king of Khotan (Hill 2009, pp. 38–39). The Chinese were also instrumental in bestowing the titles born by high nobles in the state of Further Jushi in the Turfan region, where a local Chinese commander tried to replace the king of this kingdom with its 破虜侯 *poluhou* (break the captives noble). This led to fighting that was eventually resolved by the Chinese general Ban Yong, who then bestowed the title 後部親漢侯 *houbuqinhanhou* (further division love the Han noble) on the son of the new king of Further Jushi (Hill 2009, pp. 48–51).

Table 1 Titles bestowed by the Chinese on high-ranking nobles of Central Asian non-nomad states in *Han Shu*

<i>Han Shu</i>	kingdom 國	noble titles 侯
96A	Hulwese & Loewe 1979	protect state noble kingdom noble
		attack (擊胡) or resist (卻胡) nomads noble
		peace for kingdom (安國)/ world (安世) noble
10	pp. 82–83 鄯善 Shan Shan	輔國侯 卻胡侯
16	p. 92 且末 Qiemo	輔國侯
17	p. 93 小宛 Xiaoyuan	輔國侯
20	p. 95 扞彌 Wumi	輔國侯
22	p. 97 于闐 Yutian	輔國侯
26	p. 101 蒲犁 Puli	侯 [‡]
48	p. 132 大宛 Dayuan	輔國王 [†]
56	p. 139 莎車 Suoju	輔國侯
58	pp. 141–142 疏勒 Shule	輔國侯 疏勒侯 擊胡侯
96B		
22	p. 162 姑墨 Gumo	輔國侯 姑墨侯
23	p. 163 溫宿 Wensu	輔國侯
24	p. 163 龜茲 Qiuci	輔國侯 擊胡侯 安國侯
34	p. 177 尉犁 Weili	尉犁侯 安世侯
35	p. 178 危須 Weixu	擊胡侯
36	p. 178 焉耆 Yanqi	輔國侯 卻胡侯; 擊胡侯
37	p. 179 烏貪訾離 Wutanzili	輔國侯
38	p. 179 卑陸 Beilu	輔國侯
39	pp. 179–180 卑陸後 further Beilu	輔國侯
40	pp. 179–180 郁立師 Yulishi	輔國侯
41	p. 180 單桓 Danhuan	輔國侯

<i>Han Shu</i>	kingdom 國	noble titles 侯
42 pp. 180–181	蒲類 Pulei	輔國侯
43 p. 181	蒲類後 further Pulei	輔國侯
44 p. 181	西且彌 West Jumi	西且彌侯
45 pp. 181–182	東且彌 East Jumi	東且彌侯
46 p. 182	劫 Jie	輔國侯
47 p. 182	狐胡 Huhu	輔國侯
48 pp. 182–183	山 Shan	輔國侯
49 p. 183	車師前 nearer Jushi	輔國侯 安國侯
50 pp. 183–184	車師後 further Jushi	擊胡侯

† a large state, so the sub-ruler is titled “king” instead of “noble.”

‡ the only title of the noble, so presumably this title means “state noble.”

In this broad context of the Chinese bestowal of political titles on the high ranking nobles of the Inner Asian city states, can it be that the *xihou* title also represents the same practice in relation to the nomad peoples of the same region and had a similar significance? If that is the case then the suggestion that it signifies “allied, united or harmonious noble” (Sims-Williams 2002, pp. 229–230; Hill 2009, pp. 587–590) would fit the practice of the Chinese in bestowing the traditional title of noble (*hou*) on the high nobles of its subordinate states in Central Asia.

Although the relationship of the Chinese court with the nomad states was generally troublesome, the Chinese sources show the nature of the subordination of these states to Chinese authority. The contacts between the Da Yuezhi and the Chinese in the Han period relate to attempts by the Chinese to counter Xiongnu activities through alliances with Inner Asian nomads and city states. The Da Yuezhi initially refused to cooperate with China, but further envoys were sent from the Chinese court (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 218–219), and a relationship was established. The wooden tallies from Xuanquan (Zhang Defang 2004, pp. 136–137), however, show the Da Yuezhi king and individual Da Yuezhi *xihous* (Shuangmi *xihou* and Xiumi *xihou*) subsequently sent envoys to China during the first century BC. The *Hou Han Shu* also reports the allegiance of the Da Yuezhi in the first century AD. In AD 78 the Da Yuezhi (i.e. the Kushan *xihou* Kujula Kadphises) were among a

group of western states “willing to return to allegiance” (Zürcher 1968, p. 369). In AD 86 a Da Yuezhi force fought alongside the Chinese army and their envoy was sent to the Chinese with gifts of precious stones, antelopes and lions (Zürcher 1968, p. 370). Subsequently the Da Yuezhi force turned against China and in AD 90 the Chinese army defeated it, accordingly “from that moment the Yüeh-chih were deeply impressed and sent tribute every year” (Zürcher 1968, p. 370). Although the Kushan rulers appear to have abandoned the title *xihou* from the time of this defeat, the evidence of Chinese relations with the Da Yuezhi before AD 90 suggests that their earlier use of the title could have been a consequence of its bestowal on Da Yuezhi nobles in recognition of their status as high ranking nobles of a tributary of the Chinese emperor.

The Chinese also saw the Wusun as their subordinates and allies (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 146–147), and throughout the period covered by the *Han Shu* there were frequent contacts with exchanges of envoys and gifts, and Chinese princesses were sent to the Wusun court. Kangju’s relationship with China was more detached, but envoys were exchanged and the son of its king sent to the Chinese court (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, pp. 126–128).

The three nomad peoples using the *xihou* title for their high nobles were for the most part submitted to the authority of the Chinese emperor, normally siding with the Chinese against the Xiongnu and only occasionally breaking this relationship. The reference to *xihous*, for example, under Kangju is only featured when Kangju, under duress, switched to an alliance with the Xiongnu who had occupied their territory, so its adherence to China was temporarily disrupted and duly punished.

The Chinese calling high ranking nobles among the Central Asian nomad peoples by the title *xihou* could accordingly be understood as part of the Chinese practice of including the Chinese title *hou*, normally translated as “noble” (or “marquis,” to indicate its feudal nature), in titles bestowed by the Chinese on high ranking nobles of the Inner Asian states submitting to their authority (see Table 1). In the *Hou Han Shu* there is an explicit statement that, from a Chinese perspective, it was the emperor who appointed people to the rank of *hou* noble. The context of this statement is the usurpation of the Chinese imperial throne by Wang Mang who then exercised his authority by downgrading kings to nobles in the states of Inner Asia (Yu 2014, pp. 317; Hill 2009, pp. 2–3).

The title *xihou* is distinguished from the other Inner Asian title, *hou*, by its being used for individuals from states that were not settled city states, but that consisted of nomad peoples, even

when they had settled. This distinction has also been noted by Hill (2009, pp. 588). The *Han Shu* describes all the states with *xihous* as nomads: the Wusun’s “way of life is the same as that of the Hsiung-nu,” the Da Yuezhi were “originally a land of nomads” and “followed the same way of life as the Hsiung-nu” (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, p. 120), and the Kangju’s “way of life is identical to that of the Ta Yüeh-chih” (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, p. 126). The inclusion of the two Xiongnu nobles given the title within this practice seems unlikely. Their subordination to the Chinese, having deserted from Xiongnu authority, suggests that the title *xihou* could have the same meaning, but the context of the usage in the Chinese source suggests they were given this title within the usual Chinese system of *hou*’s being a title related to a feudal estate.

Various attempts have been made explain the title *xihou* as a Chinese transcription of a title in a contemporary Inner Asian language, such as Altaic, Turkish, Iranian and Tocharian (Sims-Williams and de la Vaissière 2012). The context of its use in the Chinese chronicles suggests that it could have been bestowed by the Chinese and had a political meaning to the Chinese. It was used only for high ranking leaders of nomadic peoples, matching the practice of the Chinese bestowing *hou* titles on second-rank nobles in Inner Asian city-states.

The use of the title 翕侯 or 翮侯 *xihou* in the historical chronicles of the Han period does not preclude the possibility that this title was transcribed from an Inner Asian language, but the use of similar *hou* titles in the region suggests that it could have been a title bestowed by the Chinese court. The separate use of the character 翕 or 翮 *xi* in the Han period texts shows it was not exclusive to the context of the *xihou* title, but appears in other words: 11 times in the *Shiji*, 23 times in the *Han Shu*, and 30 times in the *Hou Han Shu* (statistics from Chinese Text Project <http://ctext.org/histories?searchu=翕&reqtype=stats>, consulted 4 Sept 2017). The majority of these uses are metaphorical and refer to the harmonious conduct of individuals and political entities. The translation of this title as “harmonious noble” or “allied noble,” rather than the suggestion that it is a transliteration, is in accord with the use of Chinese-bestowed titles and usage in the chronicles. It is also possible that the word was also a transcription into Chinese of a local title, but written in a way that also gave it an appropriate meaning for its use by the Chinese court.

The bearing of the title by nobles in three nomad groups explains its later use in the region. The high status achieved through the bearing of a Chinese title would have been enough for its

continuity after the lapse of Chinese overlordship, and in this way it continued to be used by the Hephthalites and Turks, $\eta\beta\omicron\delta\alpha\lambda\omicron\ \alpha\beta\gamma\omicron$ (Hephthalite *yabgu*) in the Bactrian documents (Sims-Williams 2007, vol. 2, pp. 122–127) and *ybgw bhlk'n* (*yabgu* of the Bactrians) in Pahlavi on coins (Vondrovec 2014, pp. 630–632) and 葉護 (*yehu*) in the biography of Xuan Zang (Li Rongxi 1995, p. 42) (for other usages see Sims-Williams and de la Vaissière 2012). These peoples seem to have been using the title in continuity from an earlier period, perhaps as successors of the Kangju or the Wusun.

USE OF *XIHOU* IN NON-CHINESE LANGUAGES IN THE EARLY KUSHAN PERIOD

The coin inscriptions of Kujula Kadphises give a range of possible transcriptions (in the genitive case) of the *xihou* title into the languages and scripts of Kujula Kadphises conquests (Table 2).

Table 2 *xihou* on the coins of Kujula Kadphises (all coin inscriptions at this period are in the genitive case)

coin type	location	language	script	<i>xihou</i> (genitive forms)
Hermaeus imitation	Begram	Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>yavugasa</i>
		Sanskrit	Kharoshthi	<i>yavujasya</i>
Augustus head	Taxila	Greek	Greek	ZAOOY (zaöou)
		Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>yaiüasa</i>
Seated king		Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>yaiüasa</i>
Soldier	uncertain	Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>yaiüsa</i>
“Heraus”	Bactria	Greek	Greek	HIAOY (ēiaou)
				HIAIOY (ēiaiou)

This interpretation of the inscription on the “Heraus” coins is still disputed (Falk 2005, pp. 85–88). I have set out the case for the structure of their inscription in a previous article (Cribb 1993). To summarise the arguments (based on examining all the then known specimens): the position of the word HIAOY in the inscriptions of both the tetradrachms and obols of this issue indicates it is intended to represent the title of the issuer. HIAOY occupies the same place as the Greek ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ on the Bactrian Greek coins of Eucratides I that were the prototypes for their designs, and the word

KOPPANOY occupies the place of the king’s name. On Eucratides I’s obols the kings’ names and royal title are the only inscriptions, likewise the “Heraus” obols are inscribed only HIAOY KOPPANOY or HIAIOY KOΠΣANOY. On Eucratides I’s tetradrachms the epithet ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ (great) is added to the title and on the “Heraus” coins the epithet ΤΥΠΑΝΝΟΥΝΤΟΣ (ruling) is added. The other instances of Kushan being used as Kujula Kadphises’s only name confirm this interpretation. The word ΣΑΝΑΒ[ΟΥ] or ΑΝΤΕΙΧ appearing between the horse’s legs has been interpreted by some as the ruler’s name, but the parallels on the coins of Gondophares (Senior 2001, pp. 152–153, types 216 and 217) and Zeionises (Senior 2001, pp. 119–120, types 130–132) make it clear that this part of the inscription is a mint control mark. The readings “Heraou,” “Heriaou” or “Miaou” are erroneous, as on no example does the letter iota have the curved top needed to make it rho, whereas the rho in ΤΥΠΑΝΝΟΥΝΤΟΣ and double rho or rho sigma in KOPPANOY or KOΠΣANOY are clear on the best inscribed examples. Other interpretations of the inscriptions do not reflect how they are written on the coins or the numismatic context within which these coins were issued.

The Gandhari (Kharoshthi) version *yaüa* is also attested in a Buddhist inscription dated Azes year 126 (= AD 80) during the reign of Kujula Kadphises (Baums, 2012, p. 235). The inscription is without provenance. The other inscriptions of Kujula Kadphises give him the title *maharaja* or *maharaja rajatiraja* and he is titled 𑀧𑀸𑀓 in Bactrian in the Rabatak inscription (Sims-Williams 2008); on his coins from Kashmir he is also given these royal titles (Jongeward and Cribb 2015, p. 23). Konow’s suggestion that the word *xihou* appears in another Kharoshthi inscription (Konow 1929, p. 27) has since been refuted (Baums 2012, pp. 211–212). Salomon has also seen a version of *xihou* contained in the title *yaḡuraṃṅa* of the son of the satrap Kharahostes, inscribed on a silver cup (1996, pp. 440–441), but it seems more plausible that it is a mistranscription of the title *yuvaraja*, used for this individual elsewhere, rather than a unique joining of the *xihou* title with a royal title in a context unrelated to the use of this Inner Asian title.

These transcriptions correspond to some extent to the reconstructions of the early Chinese pronunciations of the title *xihou*: Old Chinese *həp-gô*, Later Han *hīp-go* (Schuessler 2009, 37-1q, 10-6a); Archaic *χῑᾗp-g’u*/ Ancient *χῑᾗp-ḡəu* (Ulving 1997 [Karlgren 1957], 4301 (675q)/ 2901 (113a-d)); *xīp-ḡəw* (Pulleyblank 1991). The variations in the Gandhari and Greek versions of the title are also suggestive of

its pronunciation consistent with its transcription from a Chinese original, or its rendition in the language used by the Da Yuezhi (Sims-Williams 2002).

The transcriptions of Kujula Kadphises' name (Table 3) and of the title *xihou* show the use of Greek Z and Kharoshti *ja* and *ya* to transcribe the same initial sound. The Greek version HIAOY appears to be an attempt to use HI to match the initial sound of *xihou* as a “y” in the same way as the Kharoshthi *ya* or Greek Z. The variation in the transcription of the initial sound of *xihou* on Kujula Kadphises' coins are in keeping with the range of versions of this *j/y/z* sound in his own name (in the genitive case) on the same coins.

Table 3 Kujula Kadphises' name on his coins.

coin type	location	language	script	name
Hermaeus imitation	Begram	Greek	Greek	KOZOYΛΟΥ ΚΑΔΦΙΖΟΥ (Kozoulou Kadphizou)
		Bactrian	Greek	KOZOYΛΟ ΚΑΔΦΙΣΕΙ (Kozoulo Kadphisei)
		Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>kujula kasasa</i>
		Sanskrit	Kharoshthi	<i>kuj'ūla katsasya</i>
Augustus head	Taxila	Greek	Greek	KOZOΛΑ ΚΑΔΑΦΕΣ (Kozola Kadaphes)
		Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>kuyula kaphsasa</i>
Seated king		Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>kuyula kadaphsasa</i>
Soldier	uncertain	Bactrian	Greek	KOZOYΛΟΥ ΚΑΔΟΒΙΚΕΙ (Kozoulou Kadobikei)
		Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>kuyula kaiisa</i>
Bull-camel	Kashmir	Gandhari	Kharoshthi	<i>kuyula katakaphasa</i> <i>kuyula katakapasa</i> <i>kuyula katakaphsasa</i> <i>kuyula katakapahasa</i> <i>kuyula kaphasa</i>

KUSHAN USE OF *XIHOU* AND THE ASSOCIATED KUSHAN DESIGNATION

Kujula Kadphises used *xihou* as his only title until his contacts with the Indo-Parthians and Indo-Scythians in Gandhara, Taxila and Kashmir prompted him to adopt Gandhari royal titles, such as *maharaja rajadiraja*. On his coins some series maintain the *xihou* title. His formal relationship as submitting to the Chinese continued until as late as AD 87 when he sent tribute to the Chinese in the form of exotic animals (*Hou Han Shu* 3.17a; Zürcher 1968, p. 370), but in AD 90 he attacked the Chinese army (*Hou Han Shu* 4.3b; Zürcher 1968, pp. 370–371). After Kujula Kadphises the title *xihou* was no longer used by the Kushans.

Kujula Kadphises identified himself as Kushan *xihou*, the title first attested in the *Han Shu* (96A.15B) as 貴霜翕侯 *guishuang xihou* (Hulsewé and Loewe 1979, p. 122), and was so named in the *Hou Han Shu* (Hill 2009, pp. 28–29). The designation Kushan *guishuang* 貴霜 (Old Chinese *kwəs-sran*, Later Han *kus-šan*, Schuessler 2009, 36-2b, 3-55g) was used by Kujula Kadphises on his coins, rendered with or without the *xihou* title (Table 4). On some coins and in Kharoshthi inscriptions Kujula Kadphises appears to be called simply Kushan as though it was understood as his name. His successors continued to use Kushan as part of their official title, apparently as a dynastic designation. After the Kushan kings lost territory to the Sasanians and the Kidarite Huns this dynastic designation became associated with the territory they had ruled and their Sasanian and Kidarite successors adopted the title Kushanshah Bactrian ΚΟΠΑΝΟΠΑΥΟ Pahlavi *kwš’an MLK*, presumably meaning king of the Kushan realm.

Table 4: use of the title “Kushan” by Kushan kings.

Kushan king	coin inscriptions		stone inscriptions	
Kujula Kadphises		without <i>xihou</i>	with <i>xihou</i>	
	Greek	KOPPANOY	XOPANEY	
		KOPEANOY		
		KOPENAOY		
		KOPENOY		
	Bactrian	KOPEANEI		
		KOPEAN		
Kharoshthi	<i>oṣaṇa</i>	<i>kuṣaṇa</i>	<i>guṣaṇa</i>	
		<i>khuṣaṇa</i>	<i>khuṣaṇa</i>	
Wima Takto	Bactrian		KOḐANO	
	Kharoshthi		<i>kuśa</i> (?)	
	Brahmi		<i>kuṣāṇa</i> [putro]	
Wima Kadphises	no recorded usage			
Kanishka	Bactrian	KOPANO	KOḐANO	
	Kharoshthi		<i>guṣāṇa</i>	
Huvishka	Bactrian	KOḐANO		
Vasudeva I	Bactrian	KOPANO		
Kanishka II				
Vasishka	Bactrian	KOḐANO	<i>guṣaṇa</i>	
Vasudeva II	Bactrian	KOPANO		
Mahi				
Kipunadha				

The application of the title *xihou* to the nobles who ruled the territory of the Da Yuezhi, initially on behalf of the Da Yuezhi king, has led to some debate about the relationship between the *xihous* and the Da Yuezhi. Puri (1965, pp. 1–8), following several other commentators, suggested that the Kushan *xihou* was ruler of a tribe or clan who were allied to, but not part of the Da Yuezhi. Enoki

et al. (1994, p. 174) have made a similar suggestion that the Kushans and the other four "tribal chiefs" had been conquered by the Da Yuezhi. It seems more sensible, in the light of the way in which the Chinese texts use the title *hou* in Inner Asia, to identify the five *xihous*, including the Kushan *xihou*, as leading members of the Da Yuezhi nobility. This is the view now held by the majority of scholars, including Puri (1994, p. 247), but the view expressed by Enoki et al. still finds supporters (Yu 2011, 2014).

The title born by Kujula Kadphises, and abandoned by him before the end of his reign for the higher title "king of kings," positions him and his predecessors as high nobles of the Da Yuezhi, perhaps even originally members of its royal family, tributaries of the Chinese Empire. His replacement of the title perhaps indicated his independence from the Chinese and his adoption of an imperial role in the Iranian tradition following his establishment of hegemony over the Da Yuezhi and his conquest of territory from his Iranian and Scythian neighbors. Or perhaps his growing independence prompted the Chinese to withdraw his right to use the title and accordingly his successors also had no right to it. He and his successors, nevertheless, retained the designation Kushan as originally used with the title *xihou*. The meaning of Kushan is often misunderstood as the name of the people or state ruled by the Kushan kings, but its origins in the period before Kujula Kadphises suggests it originally referred to the family of the first Kushan *xihou* and it continued to be so used by his successors until late in the dynasty. Its use by the Sasanians who captured part of Kushan territory in the reigns of Kanishka II and Vasishka and Hun and by the Kidarites who succeeded them in Bactria and the Kushans in Gandhara had a different meaning and was used to indicate their rule over the former territory of the Kushan kings.

The use of the title *xihou* by members of four Inner Asian nomad peoples Da Yuezhi, Wusun, Kangju and Xiongnu, has been used here to question its interpretation as a formation from Tocharian or eastern Iranian and to suggest an external source for the title, i.e. that it was bestowed by the Chinese when these nomad peoples allied themselves with the Chinese, and that it had a meaning something like "allied prince." This practice seems similar to the bestowal of *hou* titles such as 輔國侯 *fuguohou* (protect the kingdom noble) on princes in the Inner Asian city states that allied themselves with the Chinese. The Da Yuezhi and therefore Kujula Kadphises, the first Kushan king, can be understood to have used the title *xihou* because of this practice. The later use of the title by Turkic

peoples in the region is not an indication of its origins, but can be understood as a survival of this honorific title among the Wusun (Mair and Cheng 2016).

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