THE REFLECTION OF TRADE RELATIONS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL CENTRAL ASIAN COINS

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Abstract. *This thesis examines the development of trade relations and monetary circulation in Central Asia during the Early Middle Ages through numismatic evidence. Coins discovered in historical regions such as Sogdiana, Chach, Ferghana, and Tokharistan provide valuable information about economic contacts, commercial routes, and interactions between different regions. The study emphasizes the importance of analyzing coins in conjunction with archaeological and written sources.*

Keywords: *Central Asia, Early Middle Ages, numismatics, coins, trade relations, Silk Road, monetary circulation, archaeology.*

Introduction

During the Early Middle Ages, Central Asia occupied an important geographical position connecting the eastern and western parts of Eurasia. Commercial routes passing through the region facilitated the exchange of goods, technologies, and cultural traditions. Urban centers developed as important locations for handicrafts, agriculture, and long-distance trade.

The study of coins is particularly important for understanding these economic processes. Coins provide evidence of monetary circulation and may help researchers identify connections between different territories. Their inscriptions, metal composition, weight, and archaeological context offer valuable information about the economic history of Central Asia.

Coins as Evidence of Trade Relations

Historical regions such as Sogdiana, Chach, Ferghana, and Tokharistan possessed distinctive political and economic characteristics. Coins produced in these territories reflect local monetary traditions and, in some cases, interactions with neighboring regions.

Sogdian merchants played a significant role in long-distance commerce across Central Asia. Their commercial activities contributed to the movement of goods and cultural influences along various branches of the Silk Road. Numismatic discoveries can help researchers investigate these connections, especially when coins are found outside the regions in which they were originally produced.

However, the discovery of a foreign coin at an archaeological site does not necessarily identify a specific trade route. Such evidence must be examined alongside archaeological layers, associated objects, inscriptions, and other historical materials.

Monetary Circulation and Economic Development

The circulation of coins was closely connected with urban life, handicraft production, taxation, and commercial exchange. Different metals and coin types could serve different economic purposes, although their precise functions varied according to period and location.

The comparison of coin weights, metal compositions, and inscriptions can reveal differences between regional monetary systems. It can also help researchers investigate changes in economic relationships over time.

Numismatic evidence should therefore be considered an essential component of research into the economic history of early medieval Central Asia. Nevertheless, conclusions about the scale of trade or the purchasing power of particular coins require additional historical evidence.

Conclusion

Early medieval Central Asian coins are important sources for understanding trade relations and monetary circulation. They provide evidence of economic contacts between Sogdiana, Chach, Ferghana, Tokharistan, and neighboring territories.

A comparative study of coins, archaeological discoveries, and written sources can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of regional economic development. Further research using archaeological mapping, metallurgical analysis, and systematic coin catalogues may clarify the character and extent of commercial connections in early medieval Central Asia.

References

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