

*Recently a private researcher placed an article in a numismatic society annual "journal" in India. The publication is not peer reviewed. I had recently placed an article for publication in another such journal in India. When published, despite promises to the contrary, only twenty percent of the article appeared and in essence appeared to be nonsense in that form. I had placed the article for publication after several years of peer pressure.*

*The article by the private researcher when published drew immediate condemnation from various "experts" for being wrong in content. The condemnation was, in part, quite vicious and unrelenting. This led to personal abuse of the writer and to a number of other people including myself.*

*It is not unusual for new work on subcontinent numismatics to be condemned by others and often in an abusive way. It is also not unusual to see such work appear later under other names and applauded.*

*To be honest I am not sure what to make of the coin in question but I do condemn the attitude of various so called experts in their treatment of independent researchers whose ideas differ from the mainstream.*

*Below is short defence of the possibility that such a coin may have existed in Kushan times and that in fact large hoards of like or similar coins are known.*

*In fact parts of the Kushan coinage remain a mystery and much current thinking defies economic logic. Further independent research is being carried on with the copper coinage of the empire noting that copper without countermark is almost always found within the boundaries of the empire itself and often sets the working boundaries of the empire itself apparently.*

*Below is the defence of the idea that such a coin may exist and the reasons why.*

## In Defence of the Idea of Major Issues of Silver Coinage in the Style of Kushan Empire Coins.

Arthur Needham et al

Given that major work has been completed in recent times on Kushan type coins there are still a number of mysteries surrounding both the economics of the empire (despite excellent work by Muckerjee and others) and the coinage. The fact that the empire transitioned to what appears to be a gold standard placed it at odds with many of its neighbours who were technically for much of the time silver based. Being strategically placed in the major overland route between east and west the empire in its widest form (now is not the time for discussions on whether some of the states were ruled or perhaps some type of fiduciary) had major benefits in trading technically both north, south, east and west.

This exposed them to essentially silver based economies for much of the time. There was a profit to be made in the exchanging of silver for gold (either way) when the mints were centrally controlled. Exchange rates and a seigniorage charge would add to the coffers of the kingdom and the money changers. So we have a large kingdom but technically isolated, monetarily so, on a major trading route. Silver would have been needed for trade, simple. The finding of large quantities of apparently silver (or silver alloy) coins in various parts of the Kushan empire that maybe struck or cast have caused concerns as to authenticity. However given the placement of the empire and the standard surrounding coinage types the finding are neither unreasonable in context nor unexpected on such a trade route.

It would not be unreasonable also to expect that some of the silver based adjoining economies (and empires) independent, fiduciary or otherwise, would have copied the Kushan coinage style (technically exactly) and produced coins in silver. There is sufficient evidence available to show that this type of copying was reasonably prevalent at this time. An argument has been put forward that silver in the Kushan empire was in short supply.

However production of metals from the general Rajasthan "copper" belt and adjacent areas from antiquity up until the middle ages saw large quantities of silver being produced and this is without other sources in Afghanistan and west. If we long slightly earlier it was not usual and noted in recently retranslated

texts that copper coins (and maybe other metals) were produced with a gold coating.

If we look slightly later there is now absolute proof that mints existed side by side that produced both struck and cast coins. The ascertaining that coins in the Kushan style made of predominantly silver are either modern fakes or somehow forgeries is not tenable given the economics of the region and noting the geographic position of the Kushan empire.

Trade both internal and external was booming. It was likely that hoards of such coins would be found and enough remain after pillaging for examination by the most modern methods under full quality control circumstances. To also see how well controlled the standing markets and marketplaces were in history in the greater subcontinent and the general regions several narratives have recently been presented by Arthur Needham et al (and I am happy to say one or two senior commentators have remarked on their apparent Marxist style).

The notion that huge quantities of fakes were made to fool the British indolent collectors is generally only sustainable in Kipling type (or a little early in Thackeray type) fiction. Adequate methods of testing (gold coated or otherwise) existed. The British may have appeared dumb (often wilfully so at times) but stupid they were not, certainly not in a mass way.

Notes are from internally published papers of the joint university metrology working group and have been previously formally published