



Feldman, A. M. (2018); 'Coinage & commonwealth (9-11 c.): local dynasties and mints in the *umma* and *oikouménē*'

Rosetta Special Edition CAHA Colloquium 2018: 1

<http://www.rosetta.bham.ac.uk/CAHAColloquium2018/Feldman.pdf>

Coinage & commonwealth (9-11 c.): local dynasties and mints in the *umma* and *oikouménē*

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For decades, it has been conventional, particularly in the West, to regard history as the province of a given “nation,” taking the word for granted without examining it in a larger context. It is the purpose of this study, via comparative numismatics, to conduct an interdisciplinary survey of the coinage of a number of Christian and Muslim Eurasian polities on which dynastic lineage has been predicated.

I will begin with a survey of the coinage of some 9-11th-c. Islamic dynasties of Central Asia (Ṭāhirids, Ṣaffārids, Sāmānids, Volga-Bulgar Almušids) and continue with some Christian dynasties during the same era (Piasts, Rjurikids, Árpáds, Danube-Bulgar Asenids). I intend to suggest that “nationhood,” as commonly taken for granted in Western parlance, originally stemmed from loyalty to a given dynastic family, as is evident from contemporary coinage. In other words, we frequently consider these abovementioned Christian families the forerunners of the modern nations of Poland, Russia, Hungary and Bulgaria respectively, yet we would hardly make such an inference for the Ṭāhirids, Ṣaffārids, Sāmānids and Almušids respectively.

The study concludes with a comparatively less studied aspect of medieval coinage pertaining to the Judaic-related coinage across both Christendom and the lands of Islam.