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Contents

Editorial note	ix
FC1. Archaeology in the Byzantine space I	1
FC2. Archaeology in the Byzantine space II	14
FC3. Numismatics and sphragistics	26
FC4. Pottery and other crafts	34
FC5. Early Byzantium	43
FC6. The Power of Byzantium	53
FC7. Periphery and provincial aristocracy	63
FC8. The Byzantines and the others	73
FC9. Monasteries and Christian paideia	85
FC10. Church Architecture I	96
FC11. Church Architecture II	109
FC12. Architectural Heritage	117
FC13. History and Literature	126
FC14. Secular Literary Genres I	136
FC15. Secular Literary Genres II	144
FC16. Hagiography and Homiletic	154
FC17. Various ecclesiastical writings	163
FC18. Byzantino-Slavica I	172
FC19. Byzantino-Slavica II	181
FC20. Byzantine theology	192
FC21. The dialogue between theology and philosophy in Byzantium	201
FC22. The Byzantine cosmologies (4th–7th c.) and their theological and philosophical sources	216
FC23. Medieval dissent: Bogomils and other religious dissidents on the Balkans	220
FC24. Warfare, diplomacy and cultural exchange, 10th–12th c.	228
FC25. Byzantium and the Papacy	241
FC26. Empire in decline I	249
FC26A. Empire in decline II	259
FC27. Art, aesthetics, music I	265
FC28. Art, aesthetics, music II	275

FC29. History of Byzantine Studies	282
FC30. Byzantium today – Projects	293
FC31. Problems of iconography. I. General questions	304
FC32. Problems of iconography. II. Christ and Saints	313
FC33. Pre-fourteenth-century murals and mosaics	320
FC34. Mural painting, 14th century	333
FC35. Miniature illumination and codicology	347
FC36. Icons, minor objects	359
FC37. Post-Byzantine art	373
FC38. Varia Byzantina	389
Poster Session	401
Index of Speakers	415

Valentina De Pasca (University of Milano, Italy)

BYZANTINE COINS DEPOSITIONS IN CHILDREN'S GRAVES (6TH–8TH C.)

This study concerns children graves brought to light in different Italian contests and dated between 6th and 8th century, that present a peculiarity: byzantine pierced coins next to child's body. Considering these finds involves not only an archaeological and numismatic approach but also anthropologic and ethnologic ones which let us to understand if this kind of grave goods were simply offerings or, oppositely, objects belonged to the infant that also in Afterlife accompanied and kept company with him.

Observing the five pierced coins, associated with a bronze stud in a Lombard little girl's grave found in Verona, we can assume for certain they were reused as pendants of a jewel of which doesn't remain no more the thread that passed through the hole, probably because it was constituted of perishable material; otherwise it is stiff to explain the pierce's presence in correspondence to the flan's border.

The real function of this kind of poor-jewel, in the most part of the cases constituted from *follis*, is unknown, however it is difficult to discern if they belonged to the tradition of the *crepundia*, infant toys like whistles, ivory or bone dolls, masks, or to the tradition of *tintinnabula*, emotional and symbolic gifts, which parents gave to their children to protect them from evil spirits thanks to the presence of coins that, from classical Antiquity, had an apotropaic function related to their metal composition and round shape.

Panos Sophoulis (University of Athens, Greece)

BYZANTINE COIN-CIRCULATION IN EARLY MEDIEVAL BULGARIA (MID 8TH – EARLY 9TH C.)

Between the early seventh and early ninth centuries, the use of money in the Byzantine empire, especially in the areas outside Constantinople, was greatly reduced – a phenomenon that was ultimately connected with the political, military and demographic crisis of the “Dark Ages”. The rapid and accentuated decline in monetary circulation is particularly evident in the northern Balkans, where extremely few coins have been unearthed in archaeological sites, from *ca.* 685 until the beginning of the reign of Constantine V (741). In the territories controlled by the Bulgars, some 15 specimens have been discovered in all, whereas for the reign of Constantine IV alone (668–685) that same area has produced more 200 stray- and hoard-finds. In this light, the frequency with which coin-finds occur in Bulgaria and southern Romania after *ca.* 750 comes certainly as a surprise. About 70 specimens from Constantine V to Leo V (813–820) are widely dispersed in present-day northeastern Bulgaria, the coast of the Dobrudja as well as in Wallachia. The presence of Byzantine coins in the “core lands” of the Bulgar state (Pliska and the surrounding regions) may be

associated with the reasonable to consider the Balkan province of the Haimos prisoners-of-war recovered in the few in number, contacts between ships on the put into the Dob for the crews. The ness with the inheritance of local region, but also to Carpathian mountains the Byzantines.

Copper coins small-scale trading clearly shows that difficult to decide if they were prized for the Dobrudjan coins been perforated or found in northeastern objects or amulets and 797, one of gold as funerary offerings as a medium of exchange any case, the numerous contacts which pointed to the Byzantine world in

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The Anonymous F struck in the name and depiction. Th 970 and 1092 are according to their