



24 x 28,5 cm, 524 pp.
 840 colour illustrations
 hardcover with jacket
 French edition
 ISBN 978-88-7439-707-5
 € 100,00
 copublished with the musées d'Art et
 d'Histoire, Geneva

SCEAUX DE LA COLLECTION GEORGES ZACOS AU MUSÉE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE DE GENÈVE

Maria Campagnolo-Pothitou and Jean-Claude Cheynet

Janet Zakos' donation to the City of Geneva, in 2004, brought the Numismatic Department of the city's Art and History Museum an exceptional set of Byzantine seals and coins comprising 480 items.

It comes from the collection of seals that George Zacos, a Byzantine antiquities dealer and renowned expert in seals, started in the mid twentieth century. The collection spans the period from the eighth to the fourteenth century and is particularly interesting for its Byzantine seals. Imperial *bullae*, including two rare gold pieces; patriarchal or ecclesiastical seals; a large number of *bullae* from members of the civil and military aristocracy with famous patronyms such as Komnenos, Doukas, Palaeologus, Lascaris, Sklèros, or Radenos, give a fairly complete view of the administrative and social organisation of the Byzantine Empire. A ninth-century *boullotèrion*, the gold seal ring of the strategist Theophilos, and tesserae for charitable purposes, including one of the Empress Eudocia, add to the richness and diversity of this collection and its excellent conservation facilitates legibility and illustration and increases its historical importance. The publication of the collection is an occasion to study already published seals in the light of the latest sigillographical research and finds, and to see a fair number of rare, unique or previously unpublished pieces, the most extraordinary of which is no doubt the five solidi chrysobullon of Constantine IX Monomachos.

This catalogue is the last in a series of five volumes on the Byzantine collections of Geneva Art and History museums, all published by 5 Continents Editions.

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