SOME UNPUBLISHED BRONZE MONEY OF THE EARLY EIGHTH CENTURY

One of the most interesting and important discoveries made in connection with the ninety thousand coins unearthed in the course of the American Excavations at the Athenian Agora concerns a group of sixty-three bronze pieces struck between the years 711 and 741 by three Byzantine emperors, Philippicus, Artemius Anastasius, and Leo III.[1] Fifteen of these types were first noted in 1933, but their poor state of preservation and their apparent uniqueness made it necessary to be extremely cautious about definite assignment. It was not until subsequent seasons of excavation had added new and, in some cases, better specimens to the collection that it was possible to attribute them with any degree of certainty. When the unclassified coins from the campaigns of 1935 and 1936 shall have been studied, as well as those which may be found in areas still unexcavated, it is probable that more of these types will be revealed; however, the number now on hand is sufficient to justify this present classification.

Forty-four of the coins were minted in the reign of Philippicus, three in that of his successor Anastasius, and the remaining sixteen at the time of Leo III. Almost all of the denominations are ten nummia indicated by a large I on the reverse of the coin. The Anastasius pieces, however, have the mark of value K (twenty nummia), and three of the Philippicus types are similarly stamped. At this period the earlier distinction in size between the two denominations had vanished; looking only at the obverses, one would have trouble in distinguishing between the oboloi of Anastasius and the dekanummia of Leo, in fact the former are often slightly smaller. Whether this identity of size reflects any change in the respective purchasing power of the two types is not definitely known, but in all probability it is merely indicative of carelessness in the re-use of old flans rather than of a deterioration or confusion of values.[2]

These coins are not museum pieces. Copper money, even of the best quality, suffered severely in the damp Agora soil, and the alloy used in the early eighth century

[1] To Professor and Mrs. T. Leslie Shear I am indebted for permission to publish this Agora material and also for many helpful suggestions during the course of its preparation. Professor Alfred Bellinger examined some of the coins and read the manuscript, and I am grateful for his comments. Mr. E. T. Newell also checked individual coins and confirmed the attributions, as did Mr. Harold Mattingly. Members of the Agora staff have been most kind about supplying excavation data.

[2] The fact that restriking almost invariably occurred over coins of higher denominations would indicate that allowance was being made for the wear and tear of circulation, an unnecessary precaution if the marks of value no longer had any meaning.

was extremely poor.[3] The thick substantial fabrics of Justinian and his successors had gradually been replaced by thinner flans, bracteate-like in appearance, which did not wear well. The holes in some of our coins are due not to artificial disfigurement but rather to the fragility of the metal itself. Identification of the types is made still more difficult by the frequency with which restriking was practiced. Some pieces have three or more impressions on the one flan and are consequently so badly confused as to be almost illegible.[4]

Since the provenance of the coins is of considerable interest a rough sketch of the excavation terrain has been reproduced in Figure 1.[5] On it each dot marks the approximate locality in which one of these pieces was found. Some topographical features are indicated, and attention is called in particular to the Valerian Wall at the right of the plan, beside which runs the great Dromos of Greek and Roman times. It is immediately apparent that there is a close connection between our money and this region of the Agora; more than two thirds of the specimens were found in areas which either adjoin or span the Valerian Wall (Sections I, P, Σ, AA, BB, ΘΘ, ZZ, and OA). The remaining coins were widely scattered over the market square, but study of their contexts showed that frequently they had come from modern surface deposits or else had been found in Byzantine filling washed down from higher sections. In the case of many of these stray pieces there was no definite connection between the coin and its location in the Agora.

With regard to the money found near the Wall, the examples in Section Σ were, for the most part, lying in sandy gravel filling along the line of the ancient street. Two coins from P were also on the northern end of the Dromos. Eight of the ten pieces from Section I to the south came from the same road deposit, while one other

[3] The analyses given by J. Hammer ("Der Feingehalt der griechischen und römischen Münzen," *Zeitschrift für Numismatik*, XXVI, 1908, pp. 140-141) do not seem at first glance to confirm this appraisal. One coin of Philippicus is included in his study. Its copper content is as high as that in some of the Anastasius I and Justin I specimens (97. 86; 97. 51; 97. 76), but since coins like ours have never been published, the Philippicus piece must be of the same type as the Ravenna issue shown in Sabatier (*Description générale des monnaies byzantines*, II, pl. XXXVIII, no. 18), which is similar in appearance to sixth-century coinage and may possibly have been restruck on an earlier flan.

Comparative analyses of the metallic content in coins are not numerous and those which do exist are frequently useless because their conclusions are based upon the evidence of only one or two coins of a given type. Research in this field should be instructive and valuable if carried out on a sufficiently large scale; even then due allowance would need to be made for conditioning factors like carelessness and expediency at the time of minting. A recent study of Greek money is that of E. R. Caley, *The Composition of Ancient Greek Bronze Coins.*

[4] The small number of illustrations is due to the poor condition of the money. Some of the best preserved pieces have been photographed, but the majority cannot be reproduced, their types being only decipherable under strong light or with the aid of magnification.

[5] This has been divided into Sections designated by letters of the Greek alphabet in accordance with the system used at the Agora, and for convenience coin locations will be expressed in terms of these Sections.

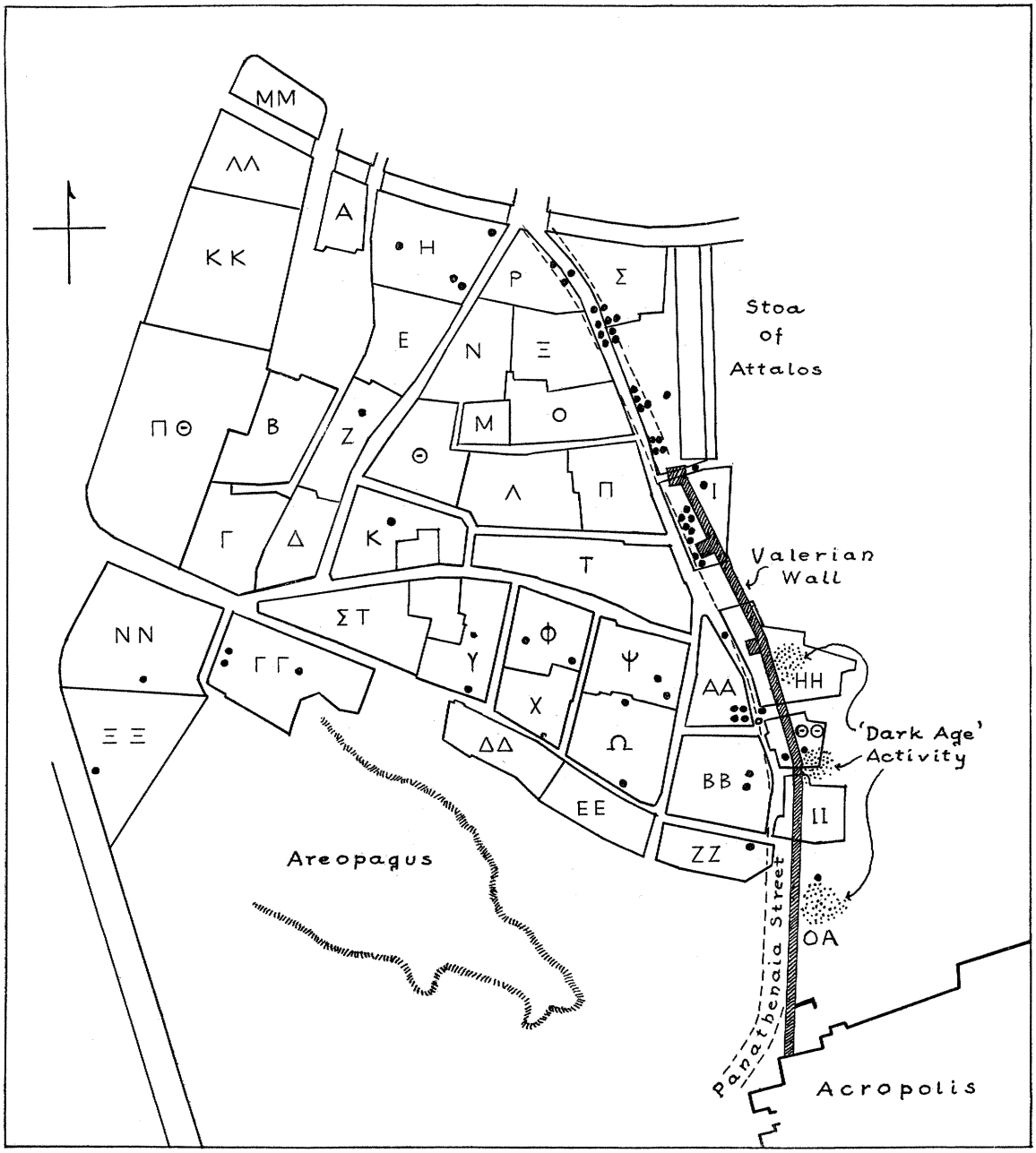

Fig. 1. Plan of the Sections of Excavation in the Agora Showing Spots Where the Coins Were Found

was found just inside a gate which had been cut through the Valerian Wall south of the Stoa of Attalos. In Sections ΘΘ, AA, and BB the coins were buried either directly in the filling of the southern stretch of the Dromos or else in gully deposits of sand, sherds, and coins conceivably washed down from the road deposit. In these upper Sections a few pieces were discovered east of the Wall, and it is to be regretted that the inclusion of a part of the Byzantine city proper in the unexcavated area of the Roman Agora makes any investigation of its numismatic evidence impossible for the present.

Traces of eighth-century Byzantine occupation are so scant in the Agora that it is difficult to interpret the location of the coins in terms of the history of the city. Arthur Parsons, who has been studying the Valerian Wall and several of the Sections close to it, has found evidence of "Dark Age"[6] activity in Section OA, high on the slope of the Acropolis, and again in Sections ΘΘ and HH further down (Fig. 1). All three areas are directly east of the Valerian Wall, which Mr. Parsons believes was still in use in the eighth century. Originally constructed in the third century after Christ, this defense fell into a state of disrepair several centuries later and was partially rebuilt during the reign of Justinian I (527-565 A.D.). The next historical mention of its existence is as a part of the city walls in the fourteenth or fifteenth century. What happened to it in the interim is uncertain, but there seems no reason to suppose a state of disuse in the time of Philippicus, so soon after the Justinian repairs, and one may assume that it formed a fortification wall for the city of that day.[7]

Parallel to the outer face of the Valerian Wall extended the ancient Street of the Panathenaia, a main thoroughfare in classical Greek times which was also used throughout the Roman era. No conclusive topographical evidence has established its continued existence in a later period; on the other hand our coins cannot be disregarded, thirty of them having been found within the confines of the ancient roadbed. Either the Roman road continued to serve the needs of the eighth-century community or else along its line were constructed the houses of the time, huddled close to the protecting city wall. Thus evidence found in OA, ΘΘ, and HH for "Dark Age" settlement inside the Valerian Wall is supplemented by our coins, which point unmistakably to the conclusion that this entire eastern section of the Greek Agora,

[6] This term is applied by Mr. Parsons in his Sections to the period which follows the sixth century and terminates with the introduction of the wares known as Byzantine. It would thus include our particular half century.

[7] In view of the Avar threat and the Slavic penetration of Greece (N. H. Baynes, "The Date of the Avar Surprise," *Byz. Zeit.*, XXI, 1912, considers the first successful attack on Constantinople to have come in 617 A.D.; the infiltration of Slavic tribes probably began a century earlier) an energetic dynasty like that of the Heraclids would scarcely have allowed the defenses of Athens to be weakened. Moreover Constans II sojourned there during the Winter of 662, which implies a safe city at that time.

within and without the fortification wall, was occupied in the eighth century, however few definite traces of such habitation have remained after centuries of rebuilding.

Prior to the Agora Excavations, the bronze coinage of Philippicus, Anastasius II, and Leo III was exceedingly rare. In the British Museum Catalogue a few gold pieces are listed for Philippicus but no bronze.[8] Sabatier, however, has one bronze type with a portrait of the emperor similar to that used on the solidi and the mark of value M on the reverse.[9] No bronze coins of Anastasius have been published by either the British Museum or Sabatier, but Count Tolstoi lists two M denominations.[10] For Leo III the coinage is more numerous. The British Museum collection includes five bronze specimens;[11] Sabatier numbers five pieces bearing the effigy of Leo alone;[12] Tolstoi adds two new types to the group.[13] However, it is by no means certain that all of these coins are to be attributed to Leo. L. Laffranchi in an interesting article, "La numismatica di Leonzio II," advances the theory that some of the types were issued by the usurper Leontius, for whose three-year reign there is no numismatic evidence.[14]

None of these published coins corresponds exactly with our denominations. There are, however, two known pieces which are closely comparable to the Agora types. One is an I coin of Philippicus (Plate II, B) in the possession of Professor Alfred Bellinger of Yale University, who also owns the M coin shown on the same plate. The other (Plate II, C) is a K piece of Anastasius owned by Mr. E. T. Newell. These two examples were procured in the course of years of numismatic collection, during which no other similar specimens were noted, and are the only unpublished pieces of which I have any knowledge.[15] This puzzling scarcity of early eighth-century

[8] *B.M.C., Byz.*, II, pp. 358-9; pl. XLI, nos. 11-14.

[9] *Monnaies byz.*, II, p. 37; pl. XXXVIII, no. 18.

[10] *Monnaies byzantines*, VIII, p. 909; pl. 64, nos. 23-24.

[11] *Op. cit.*, p. 369, nos. 21-23; p. 377, nos. 71-72. Three of the coins show the standing figure of Leo on the obverse and that of his son Constantine on the reverse. Another is a typical gold type and may have been plated with gold or electrum and intended to pass as a solidus. The last is a M issue of Ravenna.

[12] *Op. cit.*, p. 48, nos. 7-8; p. 49, nos. 11-13.

[13] *Op. cit.*, p. 930, no. 47 and p. 931, no. 52. The latter is like the *B.M.C.* gilded (?) specimen.

[14] Laffranchi (*Numismatica*, Anno IV, 1938, N. 4, pp. 73-4; and Anno V, 1939, N. 1, pp. 7-15) calls attention to the two distinct portraits of Leo present on the coins attributed to him. One, which follows the conventional oval-faced tradition, is scarcely distinguishable from other imperial effigies of the period. The second, which seems to be a true likeness, shows a sturdily built man with round face and short cropped hair. Most of the coins in the museum collections belong to the first group, but several of the twelve bronze pieces discussed above have the realistic portrait and, according to Laffranchi, were struck by Leontius.

[15] Laffranchi (*loc. cit.*, Anno V, N. 1, p. 8) shows an I coin from a Berlin collection which he ascribes to Tiberius III. The specimen is worn and to all appearances restruck, so that it is impossible definitely to question the attribution without seeing the coin itself, but from the photograph it appears very similar to our Philippicus type, nos. 1-22 in the catalogue.

coinage cannot be due to a curtailment or cessation of minting activity. The number of pieces found in the Agora proves that the types were issued in some abundance; at the same time the condition of the Agora coins indicates why so few examples have survived. In their poor state of preservation they would be of no interest to the dealer in numismatics or to the average collector. It is probable that pieces in similar condition have been brought to antiquity shops only to be considered unsalable and carelessly discarded.

PHILIPPICUS
(711-713 A.D.)[16]

	Second Striking		First Striking	
NO.	OBVERSE	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REVERSE
	Inscription. Bust of Philippicus, bearded, facing; wears crown with globus cr., robe of lozenge pattern; in r., globus cr.; in l., eagle-headed sceptre. Border of dots.	I; cross to l.; various symbols to r.; CON in exergue. Border of dots.	When clear the type seems to be that of Justinian II: two busts facing, supporting between them a globus surmounted by a patriarchal cross. Border of dots.	Justinian II K type: ANNO K
1 (R).	...ILЄPI.....	+I i CON	Left-hand bust visible; traces of globus and cross.	Vertical, lower diagonal bars of K visible; ANN to left; A below.
2.	Inscription illegible.	Same; C of ex. off flan.	Traces of two busts of which right-hand one visible.	K visible; A below; X to right. X
3.	.....ЄPI MЧ..	Same; N of ex. not clear.	.....AN..... Left-hand bust visible.	K vague; ANNO to left.
4.	.....AN	Same; I to r. vague; C, N of ex. missing.	Traces of two busts.	Obscure.
5 (R).	..... MЧ AN	Same.	Right-hand bust visible.	Obscure.
6.	Inscription illegible.	Same; lower dot missing.	.....NIA..... Two busts facing, patriarchal cross between.	K visible; A to left; A below.
7.	....LIP..O....	Same.	Two busts supporting globus cr.	Vertical bar of K visible; ANNO to left.

[16] O or R in the first column indicates that obverse or reverse of that coin is illustrated on the plate. Dots below letters of the inscriptions mean that such letters are vague. For the Philippicus portrait cf. *B.M.C., Byz.*, II, pl. XLI, nos. 11-14. For the Justinian II type cf. *ibid.*, pl. XLI, no. 8.

	Second Striking		First Striking	
NO.	OBVERSE	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REVERSE
8.	DN..ḶЄPI ṂЧ..	Same; ex. illegible.	Traces of right-hand bust and cross.	**K** vague.
9.	.... MЧ..	Same; O vague, N missing in ex.	Traces of left-hand bust.	Obscure.
10.	.....Є̣PI.....	Same; cross broken off; ex. vague.	Right-hand bust visible.	AṆ to left.
11.	Inscription illegible.	Same.	Two busts visible; patriarchal cross between.	**K** vague; ANNO to left; X in upper right field.
12.	..........MЧ̣ AṆ	Same.	Traces of left-hand bust and globus.	**K** visible; cross above; X in upper right; traces of lower X and A in ex.
13.	Inscription illegible.	Same; cross illegible; symbols at r. and N of ex. doubtful.	Left-hand bust visible; traces of right-hand one and cross.	Type completely visible.
14.	Inscription illegible.	Same.	Traces of two busts and cross, left-hand one clear.	**K** vague; cross visible.
15.	Inscription illegible.	Same.	Left-hand bust and globus visible.	**K** vague; ANNO at left and X in upper right clear.
16 (O).	.... MЧ ẠṆ	Same; cross vague.	........ỊЧṢP̣...... Two busts and globus between.	Seems to have been a Justinian **M** type; **M** vague, A..O to left and X in lower right.
17 (O).	.... ṂЧ̣ ẠN	Same.	Traces of restriking but not clear.	
18.	.... MЧ̣ A.	Same; ex. vague.	" " "	" " "
19 (O, R).	...Є̣PỊC̣ЧṢ MЧḶ Ṣ.Ṇ	Same.	" " "	" " "
20.	Inscription illegible.	Same.	" " "	" " "
21.	Inscription illegible.	Same; lower dot at r. off flan; ex. vague.	" " "	" " "
22.	.... MЧ ẠṆ	Same; both fields and ex. vague.	" " "	" " "
23 (O, R).	.....ЄPICOP̣P̣..	+I ir / CON Exergue here is vague.	Two busts facing, left-hand one clear; traces of patriarchal cross.	**K** vague; ANNO to left; X X to right, upper one vague.

	Second Striking		First Striking	
NO.	OBVERSE	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REVERSE
24.	..... MЧ ANN	Same; ex. vague.	Left-hand bust and cross visible.	☧ visible; ANNO to left; X X to right.
25.	.....AV..	Same; cross vague.	Left-hand bust visible; traces of cross.	Lower half of ☧ visible; ANNO at left; traces of X X at right.
26.	Inscription illegible.	Same.	Left-hand bust visible.	Obscure.
27.	....LЄPIC MЧ..	Same; symbols at r. vague.	Traces of restriking but not clear.	
28.	Portrait vague.	Same; symbols at r. vague.	Obscure.	☧ visible; cross above; ANNO to left.
29.	Inscription illegible.	+I ra CON	.....Є.TIBЄ.... Two busts facing, right-hand one clear; traces of cross.	☧ vague; A (possibly NNO) to left; A below; X X to right.
30 (R).	DN.....	Same.	Traces of restriking but not clear.	
31.	Inscription illegible.	Same I type; r. field and ex. vague.	DNIVSTINIANЧSЄTTIBЄRIVSP... Two busts facing; cross between them.	Diagonal bars of ☧ visible; ANNO to left; cross above; X X to right, lower one vague.
32.	Inscription illegible.	Same I type; symbols at r. and N of ex. off flan; C of ex. vague.	Left-hand bust visible.	Obscure.
33.	.....MЧ..	Same I type; r. field vague.	Traces of two busts but very vague.	Traces of ☧; possibly ANNO to left.
34.	..ЄPIC MЧ..	Same I type; r. field vague.	Left-hand bust visible.	☧ vague; ANNO to left; A below.
35.	Inscription and bust obscure.	Same I type; r. field off flan.	Two busts with patriarchal cross between.	☧ vague; ANNO to left; possibly X X to right.
36.	....LЄPIC.....	Same I type; r. field and ex. illegible.	Left-hand bust visible.	Traces of ☧; possibly ANNO to left.
37.	DNFILIP.....	Same I type; both fields and ex. illegible.	Two busts facing; cross between.	☧ visible; ANN to left; A below; X X to right.
38.	Inscription illegible.	I visible; traces of cross to 1.	Obscure.	ANNO to left.

	Second Striking		First Striking	
NO.	OBVERSE	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REVERSE
39.	.....PIC.....	Traces of I and CON of ex.	Left-hand bust; traces of globus.	Traces of K; ANNO to left. Beneath this is 
40.	Inscription and portrait obscure.	No trace.	.....ЄTTIBЄRIVSP... Two busts with cross between. Beneath this is a previous striking, possibly of Tiberius III. 	Traces of K; possibly ANNO to left.
41 (O).	DNFIL.....	Same I type; r. field illegible and cross at l. vague.	Traces of restriking but not clear.	
42 (O, R).	.....PI..MA	 Here O at l. is off flan; possibly X/X to r.	All of these coins seem to have been restruck but no types are clear. Either they are mules, the I type not having taken over the K of Justinian II, or else they represent a K denomination of Philippicus.	
43.	..... AN	Same; NO at l. illegible, also cross above and symbols at r.; B below.		
44.	Inscription illegible.	Same; cross and symbols at r. illegible; Γ below.		

That these coins were minted during the reign of Philippicus seems beyond question. The obverse portrait, a copy of that reproduced on the solidi, shows a bust of the emperor with heart-shaped face framed by long hair conventionally arranged beneath a crown which is surmounted by a globus cruciger. Like most of his contemporaries Philippicus has abandoned military costume and is represented as consul wearing a robe of lozenge pattern and carrying a globus cruciger and an eagle-headed sceptre.[17] This particular combination of robe and sceptre is distinctive, and, as far as is known, is used only by Philippicus at this period. Comparison of the coins shown

[17] One would like to connect this sceptre with the dream of the youthful Philippicus in which he saw an eagle hovering over his head, thus clearly portending his future rule, but as Wroth points out (*B.M.C., Byz.*, I, p. xxxiv) the same kind of sceptre is carried by Maurice Tiberius, Phocas, and other of Philippicus' predecessors when they are depicted in their consular capacity.

on Plate II with those on Plate XLI of the British Museum Catalogue will illustrate how closely the bronze type copies the gold.

In classifying the issues it was apparent that many pieces had been struck from the same obverse die; accordingly an attempt was made at matching portraits to determine the extent of duplication. As was to be expected, some obverses were too blurred or confused for satisfactory comparison, but thirty-one of the types were sufficiently legible. The results are intensely interesting. All thirty-one coins have been struck from only six dies,[18] which is an amazingly small number when one considers that the coinage is copper and that several reverse types are represented. No coördination of portrait and reverse grouping is possible; the same obverse die has been used in combination with as many as three reverse types.

The six different die impressions are shown on Plate II. Type I is represented by only one coin (No. 19 in the catalogue) and may have been in the nature of an experiment at adapting the effigy of Philippicus for bronze issues. The attempt has not been entirely successful for, although the attributes of the emperor have been meticulously copied, the tiny size of the representation makes it impossible to trace any facial resemblance between it and the gold types and gives a crowded appearance to the flan. This coin has the most complete legend, reading with some restoration as DNFILЄPICЧS MЧL SAN. In Type II, of which there are eight pieces,[19] the bust has been slightly enlarged with consequently improved effect, and since there is now less space for an inscription, the abbreviation DNFILЄPIC MЧ AN occurs. These last four letters, arranged in pairs above and below the eagle-headed sceptre, are from now on the usual termination of the legend. From the standpoint of style Type III is the best die.[20] The emperor's portrait, a trifle larger than in the preceding group, fills the available space to the best advantage, and a shortened sceptre makes the picture more compact and pleasing. On the flan illustrated in Plate II the inscription seems to read [DNFIL]ЄPICO with possibly PP following on the left half of the coin. Another example from the group may have AV just above the sceptre, which would give the complete legend DNFILЄPICOPP AV. Only one coin (No. 42), a carelessly executed piece, is a product of the fourth die. The legend seems to end PI MA above and below the sceptre, the most abbreviated form that we know. Type V[21] was, if the proportions of this collection are any indication, the most popular striking. In it the face has broadened and assumed a disagreeable expression. The sceptre is longer than in previous groups and the cross on the crown is somewhat off centre, which speaks

[18] These statistics for Philippicus should be compared with those for his successors. The three Anastasius coins in the collection are all from different dies. Twelve of the Leo specimens are legible and they represent at least ten dies. Nos. 7, 9, and 12 in the catalogue may be identical.

[19] Nos. 9, 14, 17, 22, 27, 31, 34 and 36 in the catalogue. No. 17 is illustrated.

[20] Nos. 2, 23, 25 and 26 have been struck from it. No. 23 is illustrated.

[21] Nos. 1, 3, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 18, 20, 32. No. 16 is illustrated.

of careless workmanship. One legend has survived in almost complete form, so that an original reading of DNFILЄPI MЧ AN may safely be assumed for this type. In the final class [22] the imperial bust is as much too large as it was too small at first. On most of the flans there is scarcely room for the sceptre, and the inscription has often vanished completely. The portrait is overelaborate, a tendency especially noticeable in the waving of the hair. The surviving letters of the legends would suggest that they began DNFILIP; the termination is dubious.

It is impossible to stress too strongly the uncertain and tentative quality of these inscription readings. As can be seen from the catalogue, no legend has been preserved in its entirety. Perhaps ten per cent of the remaining letters are fairly legible, the others have been deciphered by dint of careful scrutiny in direct sunlight and by comparison with the better preserved legends on museum coins. Although our readings do not duplicate exactly any of the forms commonly found on the gold pieces,[23] unless in the case of Type III, the variations are plausible, consisting of abbreviations rather than basic changes.

The mark of value **I** is stamped upon forty of the Philippicus specimens. In every case the exergue letters, when preserved, are CON, while the left field is occupied by a cross. The symbols at the right vary. On most of the coins there is an I with a dot to the left above and another to the right below, survivals perhaps of the serifs of a well-formed Roman numeral one. It is quite probable that the I is indicative of Philippicus' first regnal year although this logical interpretation is somewhat weakened by the failure of other issues to continue the same system of dating. A second group of coins has the combination IΓ, above which is another I or Γ. Two other specimens have ΓA in the right field. The meaning of these symbols, if meaning they had, is a mystery. Certainly no date can have been intended, unless one reads the year from the upper I of the $\frac{I}{IΓ}$ combination. Yet why should there be two totally different **I** issues to mark the emperor's first year? Some slight clue is afforded by the solidi of Philippicus in the British Museum collection on which the reverse legend VICTORIA AVSЧ is followed by similar meaningless letters. In one case ΘΓ is used, in others Γ and A.[24] The die-cutters may have simply transferred the combination of letters from the gold to the copper, though this assumption brings us no closer to an understanding of their initial significance.

The three **K** coins listed at the end of the catalogue have all been restruck, but the types are not clearly defined. Either they are mules, or else they represent a **K** issue of Philippicus.

[22] Nos. 15, 21, 30, 37, 38, 41. No. 41 is illustrated.

[23] DNFILЄPICЧS MЧL TЧSAN, DNFILЄ PICOPPAVG, and DNFILIPI CO AЧT. From the British Museum, Sabatier, and Tolstoi. There are, of course, slight differences in phrasing, but these seem to have been the standard inscriptions.

[24] *B.M.C., Byz.*, II, p. 358; cf. note 2.

Not one of the flans is new. In a few cases the original striking is not clear, but for the most part enough has remained to identify the first type as that of Justinian II shown with his son Tiberius supporting a patriarchal cross between them. The initial value of the coins, twenty nummia, has been lowered to ten with allowance made for usage. Two pieces have been struck three times, the original denomination of one being an M, which is credible in view of its large flan. The other has what seems to be another K type below the customary Justinian II obverse, and it may possibly have been issued by Tiberius III and marked with his regnal year IV.

ANASTASIUS II, ARTEMIUS
(713-716 A.D.)[25]

	Second Striking		First Striking	
NO.	OBVERSE	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REVERSE
	Inscription. Bust of Anastasius II, bearded, facing; wears crown with cross and paludamentum and cuirass; in right, globus cr.; in left, mappa; in field right, cross. Border of dots.			
1 (O, R).	DNAPT.....	42 20 K Possibly cross to right.	May have been restruck, but there are no definite traces.	
2 (O).	...PTEM ANASTA..IVS	Same; symbols at right illegible.	Traces of restriking, but not clear.	
3.	...PT.....	Same; Γ below vague; possibly X/X to right.	Bust of Anastasius II (?); cross in field right.	K; AN to left; Δ to right.

Both portraits and inscriptions prove that this group of coins belongs to Anastasius II. In every detail of dress and insignia of office the bronze type tallies with the gold. The only difference is a cross in the right field which has been placed on the obverse of the bronze pieces and is not found on the solidi, but at this period letters and symbols were often scattered promiscuously on both obverses and reverses so that addition of the cross would in no way affect the attribution.[26] The restored legend seems to be DNAPTEM ANASTASIVS, as far as can be judged from the Agora coins, and although this does not coincide with other known readings, it offers no problem.

[25] For portrait cf. *B.M.C., Byz.*, II, pl. XLI, nos. 15-21.

[26] One bronze coin pictured in Tolstoi (*op. cit.*, pl. 64, no. 23) has the cross to the right of the bust.

The reverses, all K denominations, have the same officina mark Γ. The symbols on the right are very vague, and it is impossible to be certain of any particular reading. In the one case which shows unquestionable restriking this has occurred over another K type, belonging either to Anastasius or to one of his predecessors.

LEO III
(717-741 A.D.)[27]

	Second Striking		First Striking	
NO.	OBVERSE	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REVERSE
	Inscription. Bust of Leo III, bearded, facing; wears military costume and helmet with cross and fan-shaped crest; in r., spear held transversely; in l., shield with horseman (?) device. Border of dots.	I; ✳ to left; X X or X X to right; CON in ex. Border of dots.		
1 (R).	Inscription obscure.	✳I CON	Justinian II type. Traces of two busts facing.	K visible; ANNO to left.
2.	Inscription and portrait obscure.	Same; cross and symbols at right vague.	.....ЄTTIB..... Two busts facing, supporting a globus with PAX on it, surmounted by patriarchal cross.	Obscure.
3 (O).	Inscription obscure.	Same; symbols at right illegible; ex. vague.	Traces of globus and right-hand bust.	Vertical bar of K visible; A to left; X in upper right.
4 (R).	Inscription obscure.	Same; ex. illegible.	Obscure.	K visible; NNO to left; A below; ` to right.
5.	Inscription obscure.	Same; ex. illegible; star vague.	Traces of two busts and globus.	K visible; ANNO to left.
6.	.....MЧL	Same; cross illegible; ex. vague.	Bust of Anastasius II facing; cross in field right.	K visible; ANNO to left. Γ below.
7.	Inscription obscure.	Same; cross and N of ex. vague; symbols at right illegible.	Bust of Anastasius II (?) facing.	K visible; ANNO to left; Γ below.
8.	..... AMЧL	Same; CO of ex. vague.	Obscure.	Obscure.

[27] For portrait of Leo cf. Tolstoi, *op. cit.*, VIII, pl. 65, no. 43.

	Second Striking		First Striking	
NO.	OBVERSE	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REVERSE
9 (O).	Inscription obscure.	Same; cross illegible.	Obscure.	Obscure.
10.	Inscription obscure.	Same; ex. vague.	Obscure.	Upper half of K visible; A to left.
11 (O, R).	DNLЄO.....	Same; ` below symbols at right; O of ex. vague.	Traces of two busts and the globus with PAX on it.	Traces of K.
12 (O).	Inscription obscure.	Same; ` below symbols at right; upper X vague.	Obscure.	Traces of K.
13.	Inscription obscure.	Same; faint traces of I and exergue line.	Obscure.	K visible; ANNO to left; A below; ` to right.
14.	Inscription and portrait obscure.	Same; symbols at right illegible; cross, star, and O of ex. vague.	Obscure, possibly traces of right-hand bust of Justinian II type.	Obscure.
15.	....N PAMЧL	Faint traces of what may be an I.	Obscure.	Complete Justinian II reverse; Γ below the K.
16.	.....PAMЧ.	I and exergue line visible.	Obscure.	Complete Justinian II reverse; K with A below.
			Beneath this striking is another: Bust of Tiberius III (?) holding spear across body. (cf. *B.M.C., Byz.*, II, pl. XL, no. 26).	M

These coins were the most interesting and the most difficult ones in the collection. When they first began to appear, they were classified as new types of Constantine IV, the portrait being interpreted as a likeness of that emperor in military dress with plumed helmet, and spear held transversely over the right shoulder. Subsequent finds seemed to correspond more closely to the gold type of Tiberius III and were tentatively placed in his reign. For several years no definite decision was reached; then three discoveries linked the coins with Leo the Third. (1) A silver type in Tolstoi,[28] not listed in any other catalogue, has an unusual portrait of Leo carrying a spear over his right shoulder and wearing the same highly distinctive crested helmet that can be clearly seen on Coin 3 on Plate II. (2) During the 1939 excavation season

[28] *Monnaies byz.*, VIII, pl. 65, no. 43.

a well-preserved specimen was found on which, for the first time, the initial letters of the obverse inscription could be deciphered. The customary D and N of the formula are very clear, the L which comes next is almost certain, and following it are traces of E and O. (3) Finally, a re-examination of the whole group revealed the fact that the original type on two of the coins was that of Anastasius II, the identifying cross in the right field showing very plainly.[29] This discovery necessitated the assignment of the coins to an emperor succeeding Anastasius and probably preceding Constantine V whose bronze currency is fairly common and totally dissimilar to the pieces in question, introducing as it does several variations in the traditional copper types. Thus everything pointed to Leo.

As has already been noted, the portrait on the Agora money is a copy of that used for a silver issue described in Tolstoi. There can be no mistaking the unusual helmet. The reproduction in bronze of a silver instead of a gold type is somewhat disturbing; however, the only argument against it is that of tradition, and unless a missing gold prototype is invented, one must believe that in this case custom was set aside. The particular silver issue listed in Tolstoi is rare,[30] but it is impossible to say whether or not this was true in the time of Leo, so scant is the surviving fund of Byzantine silver for all periods.

On only five coins is an obverse legend visible, even in fragmentary form. Joining the letters preserved on Nos. 11 and 15 in the catalogue would give a complete reconstruction of DNLЄON PAMЧL, which is in accord with some of the inscriptions on the nomismata.

Like the majority of the Philippicus pieces, Leo's coins are I denominations with the abbreviation for Constantinople in the exergue. To the left is the customary cross, below which Leo has added a star. On the right are two X's, one above the other, which should mean Leo's twentieth regnal year (i. e., 736/37 A.D.). Two coins have a slanting line below the lower X and if this was intended for a V, which is the British Museum interpretation of a similar mark on the coinage of Justinian II, the date of these two specimens would be the twenty-fifth year of the Isaurian's rule. If one accepts June 18, 741 as the date of Leo's death, then his twenty-fifth year of sovereignty would have started on March 25 of that same year, hence these coins would belong to the last three months of his life.[31] There is the possibility, however,

[29] I am indebted to Mr. Newell for pointing out the cross on one of these coins.

[30] It is interesting to note that this type, of which all the Agora coins are a reflection, has the portrait which Laffranchi believes is that of Leo rather than Leontius. Since our coins must belong to Leo, they substantiate his theory.

[31] This raises the moot question of the chronology of Theophanes. In this author, who wrote in the early ninth century and so is one of the few contemporary sources for this period of history, there is a disagreement between the years of the world and the years of the indiction (a fifteen-year cycle adopted by the Crown for taxing purposes). The error occurs from 610 to 773 except for the interval between 714 and 726 during which the two systems of dating correspond. Reckoning from

that no date should be read into these symbols. The custom of placing the regnal years on the currency is not followed consistently in this period, and, as has been noted on the coins of Philippicus, instead of dates one often finds what seem to be nonsense combinations of letters.[32] It is suggestive that the same double X marking occurs on the coins of Justinian II over which the Leo types have been struck.

Before any interpretation of this currency is attempted, it might be well to glance briefly at its numismatic setting. As coins continued to be found at the Agora in numbers sufficient to make their relative proportions significant, some time was spent in compiling a chart showing the sectional and chronological distribution of the sixty thousand classified pieces. Even the most casual study of the Byzantine part of this table reveals with startling clearness the paucity of coinage during the eighth and ninth centuries.[33] An abundance of money has survived from the reigns

the creation of the world would make 740 the date of Leo's death; the indictions would place it one year later. Arguments have been advanced for both points of view, but the reasoning of E. W. Brooks ("The Chronology of Theophanes 607-775," *Byz. Zeit.*, VIII, 1899, pp. 82-97) and G. Ostrogorsky ("Die Chronologie des Theophanes im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert," *Byz.-Neugr. Jahrbücher*, VII, 1930, pp. 1-56) seems valid enough to justify the date 741. They have compared Theophanes' dates with those given in Eastern sources, in contemporary papal documents, and in other papers, and have also computed the year by a correspondence between the day of the week and of the month when these are mentioned. On the whole it seems as though the year of the indiction were correct, and this is as one would naturally suppose, since that method of dating rather than the cumbersome Anno Mundi calculation was the common practice.

Most of the early historians speak of Leo as having reigned 24 years, which would not be true if he died in 740. Theophanes (*Chronographia*, I, ed. Bonn, p. 635) makes it 24 years, 2 months, and 25 days. Cedrenus (*Compendium Historiarum*, II, p. 458) gives the same regnal span. Zonaras (*Epit.*, XV, 4) simply states that when Leo had reigned 24 years, he died. In the *Chronographia Brevis* (J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, C, p. 1018) Nicephorus lists 25 years, 3 months, and 14 days for Leo; but when he writes *De Rebus Gestis* (*Patr. Gr.*, C, p. 966), he asserts that the emperor died in the 24th year of his rule. A footnote suggests that the word "after" should be placed before 24th.

[32] The practice of precise dating began to decline in the latter part of the seventh century, and by the time of Justinian II the symbols cannot be relied upon as infallible indications of the year of reign.

[33] A great deal of the work represented in the chart was done by Elisabeth Washburn of the Agora staff.

Tabulation of the chronological data for Byzantine times gives the following picture:

6th century	— 254 coins	10th century	— 146 coins
7th "	— 736 "	11th "	— 1983 "
8th "	— 8 "	12th "	— 2580 "
9th "	— 56 "		

During the particular period in question, the first half of the eighth century, statistics by emperors show: Tiberius III, 1; Justinian II (second reign), 4; Leo III, 1. The 63 coins under present discussion are, of course, not included, but now that they are definitely dated in the eighth century, the totals for that period must be revised upward. It should be remembered that the boundaries of the Greek Agora do not include the areas from which one would expect Byzantine

of Heraclius and Constans II. After that there is only an insignificant trickle until the Anonymous Coinage begins in the late tenth century. For some years the output of Constans' mints would have been sufficient for the city's needs,[34] but three centuries separate Constans from John Zimisces, who initiated the Anonymous series. At one time it was thought that this monetary shortage of three-hundred-years' duration might have been due to an Athenian " Dark Ages " during which the city was recovering from a severe cultural and economic setback consequent upon the barbarian invasions. Perhaps her population was drastically reduced with the result that the city shrank behind the Valerian Wall and occupied only the site of the old Roman Agora. In excavating it one might find the money of the eighth and ninth centuries. Now, however, the Agora has a collection of coins definitely assignable to the early eighth century, and the " Dark Ages " theory must be revised in some degree. One hundred and thirteen pieces [35] is a fair representation for forty years, especially when one remembers that for more than half of that period, the Empire was in a state of chaos. Numismatically speaking, there is no more reason for selecting the early eighth century as a period of barbarism than the early sixth, the time of Justinian.

But if these coins have thrown some light on one period of Byzantine history, they have also added a new problem. Before their appearance there was not enough

currency in greatest quantity. If the Roman market place were dug, the above ratios might be affected, though it is probable that the totals on hand represent a fair cross-section of the city's commercial history during Byzantine times.

Through the kindness of Professor Oscar Broneer and Miss Josephine Harris, the numismatic totals from the excavations at Corinth have been made available for purposes of comparison. Some 30,000 Byzantine coins are involved; these, when arranged in the same chronological brackets as our money, give the following proportions:

6th century	— 2833 coins	10th century	— 2513 coins
7th "	— 181 "	11th "	— 14803 "
8th "	— 9 "	12th "	— 9071 "
9th "	— 1439 "		

From the first half of the eighth century only three pieces have survived: Tiberius III, 1; Justinian II, 2.

It is interesting to compare the Agora totals with those from another important Greek city. The two sites show the same overwhelming influx of coinage in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the same poverty in the eighth. However the Corinthian " depression " began a century sooner than the Athenian one and ended more than a century earlier. Judging by the numismatic evidence, conditions there seem to have been more severe than in Athens. The explanation of these periods of prosperity and hardship must lie in the respective annals of the two cities, and one could wish that more were known about the provincial history of the Byzantine Empire.

[34] In fact, the worn condition of the coins indicates hard usage; on the other hand the poor quality of the metal and the frequency with which old flans were reworked must have shortened their circulation period.

[35] This includes the six coins previously known, and the sixty-three new eighth-century pieces, with a double count of the forty-four Philippicus issues. The reason for this last will be clearer in the course of the next pages.

money; now in one respect there seems too much. The totals for Anastasius and Leo are what one might expect, but it is hard to believe that in the ordinary course of a three-years' reign, a troubled reign at that, Philippicus would have issued so much currency that forty-four pieces have survived in a fairly distant part of the Empire. Or if the quantity found in Athens is representative of the magnitude of Philippicus' minting operations, then why have his coins been found nowhere else? It remains to see whether the history of the period affords any clue.

With the reign of Constantine IV the Byzantine Empire experienced the last measure of internal stability that it was to know for many years.[36] Justinian II, his successor and the last of the Heraclid dynasty, made himself so unpopular by his cruelty and greed that his general Leontius was able without difficulty to incite a revolt and seize the throne. After three years Leontius in his turn was pushed from power, the new emperor being an admiral, Apsimarus, who ruled as Tiberius III for seven years. But Tiberius had only a feeble grasp on the imperial sceptre. When the legitimate emperor Justinian returned with a force of Bulgars, he had little trouble in regaining his crown. Constantinople again suffered under this tyrant, now so maddened by his humiliations that he could think of nothing but revenge. He held the throne for six years, until the excess of his own cruelty brought about his downfall. A punitive expedition against the people of Cherson was organized by Justinian and entrusted to a patrician Bardanes. The Chersonese, in fear, sought aid of the neighboring Khan of Khazar, so that the Byzantine troops found it impossible to carry out their orders. Afraid to return and report failure, they joined the revolting citizens and saluted their own leader Bardanes as emperor.

Thus Philippicus, for so he chose to be called, came to the throne. The people were glad to be rid of the bloody Justinian, and had the new emperor been a stronger character he might have enjoyed a long and prosperous reign. Unfortunately Philippicus had the idea that the imperial office was his plaything. With the Bulgars threatening him on the north and a discontented military faction plotting against him in the capital, he did nothing but pass his days in a round of revelry and pleasure, during the course of which the ample treasury of Justinian was emptied and the temper of the people turned against him. Moreover, he was a monothelite and, motivated by zeal or superstitious fear,[37] he tried to foist that religious heresy upon

[36] The historical résumé which follows has been gathered from the two contemporary sources: Theophanes, *Chronogr.*, and Nicephorus, *De Rebus Gestis.* In addition Cedrenus, *Compendium Hist.*, and Anastasius, *Chronogr. Tripertita,* have been used. More modern historians include: C. Diehl, *Histoire de l'Empire byzantin* and *The Emperor Who Lost His Nose*; E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; G. Finlay, *Greece under the Romans* and *History of the Byzantine and Greek Empires*; J. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire*; A. Vasiliev, *Histoire de l'Empire byzantin; Cambridge Medieval History,* Vol. IV; W. Miller, *Essays on the Latin Orient*; and F. C. Schlosser, *Geschichte der bilderstürmenden Kaiser.*

[37] The legend goes that Philippicus early in life had been promised the imperial power by a monothelite monk on condition that he use his new office to spread that faith.

the people. The Byzantine chroniclers record only one good quality for Philippicus, a certain facility of expression which made him an interesting speaker, but more than that was necessary to hold a usurped throne. As was inevitable, dissatisfaction grew until at Whitsuntide in 713 a group of soldiers broke into the palace, seized the emperor and blinded him. On the following day Artemius, a royal secretary, was acclaimed by popular vote as the new ruler, while the forgotten Philippicus was hurried to a monastery in which he ended his days.

In this short misspent reign there seems nothing which would explain our coins. As far as is known, Philippicus had no direct contact with Athens, nor does it seem probable that the amount of currency found in the Agora reflects any adjustment of the Empire's finances. Apart from his own weak and inefficient nature, the briefness of Philippicus' reign and the internal and external unrest of the times would have precluded any extensive fiscal reforms. It may be, however, that the solution of the problem lies in that very state of imperial anarchy. In looking over our group of coins, Professor Bellinger suggested that their occurrence in Athens might be due to local minting. Startling as the theory seems at first, it has many points in its favor. First, it must be remembered that these specimens have been found only in Athens. None have turned up in the Corinth excavations, none are listed in the museum collections, and none are for sale in the bazaars of Constantinople.[38] It would seem, then, that they were a local phenomenon.

Other factors lead to the same conclusion. It is noteworthy that the money has been struck from only six dies, which is an astonishing duplication in a fairly large group of coins, presumably coming from a distant mint. The whole succession of dies, as outlined above, points to a fumbling experiment at minting, possibly by craftsmen not accustomed to the work. The portraits resemble those used on the provincial Italian issues rather than the more skillful products of the capital's workshops.[39] Finally the fact that all of the metal has been re-used is suggestive of a local origin. Although the imperial Byzantine mint used all material, old and new, which

[38] As has been mentioned before, the poor preservation of the coins may be sufficient explanation of their absence from museum collections and from antiquity shops, but the Corinth excavations, involving many more Byzantine coins than have been found in the Agora, should include some Philippicus money, if that money was struck on a large scale at Constantinople and then distributed throughout the Empire, unless, of course, Corinth for all practical purposes had ceased to exist at that period.

[39] Whether die-cutters were sent from Constantinople or whether local men were used is a question. In view of the unskillful work probably the latter was true. It is to be noted that the exergue abbreviation for Constantinople has been retained, but this is also true of the gold and silver money of this period which Wroth assigns to provincial mints (*B. M. C., Byz.*, II, pp. 350-1, nos. 19-22; p. 357, no. 12; etc.). CONOB is uniformly used, making it seem likely that only in the case of bronze issues was the local mint allowed to use its own letters. However, Athens, striking an isolated issue of bronze under unusual circumstances, would probably not have been accorded even this opportunity for self-identification.

came to hand, it would scarcely have issued nothing but restruck coins. A temporary provincial mint would find it much easier to adapt old flans than to prepare new ones.[40]

This hypothesis of an Athenian mint is, as Professor Bellinger points out, not so improbable if one assumes that it functioned with imperial sanction. May not Athens, finding her supply of bronze currency worn and inadequate, have asked Byzantium for new issues, only to be told that there was no way of sending them. The Saracens were invading province after province in Asia Minor, their fleet was a powerful force in the eastern Mediterranean; at the same time Bulgar bands were threatening the Golden Gate of Constantinople and plundering citizens who ventured across the Hellespont. Troubled as he was by enemies without and discontent within, Philippicus was scarcely likely to have bothered about a plea for financial assistance from a remote province. One can readily imagine his remarking, "If they have no money, let them coin some," utterly heedless of the dangerous precedent inherent in such an action.

The conception of Athens as an insignificant Byzantine village in the early eighth century must be relinquished if one credits her with minting activity. There are supplementary historical indications of her importance, among which the most striking is the expedition of 727 A.D. A force of mainland and island Greeks, aroused by Leo's iconoclastic decrees, equipped a fleet and set out to attack Constantinople.[41] The ships were destroyed by Greek fire, but the fact that they ever put to sea was eloquent of the strength of the country. In the eighth century there were still cities in Greece sufficiently resourceful and determined to stage an armed revolt against an infringement of their rights. What part Athens took in the rebellion is uncertain, but as one of the chief cities of Hellas she must have had a share in it.[42] The decentralization which made such an expedition possible was an outgrowth of the anarchy of the period. In the time of Justinian I the provinces had been disarmed and robbed of their fiscal powers in an effort to render them dependent upon the central government. This was all very well under rulers like Justinian and Heraclius, but when the central

[40] If one accepts these coins as local products, then they had a double period of circulation, first in the reign of Justinian II and again, reworked and re-issued, in the time of Philippicus. Thus, as indicated above, they should be counted twice in tabulating the amount of currency struck in the early eighth century.

[41] F. Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Athen*, I, pp. 109-111.

[42] The fact that Athens is not included in the list of cities which Constantine Porphyrogenitus (*De Thematibus*, II, 5) mentions for the *theme* Hellas is not significant since Thebes is also omitted and that city was presumably the capital. Rather the omission implies that Athens like Thebes was too obvious for comment. In 662 she was the winter home of an emperor; a century later she supplied an empress for the Byzantine throne; in the ninth century she became an archbishopric, then a metropolis (Gregorovius, *op. cit.*, p. 156). Later still, in the eleventh century, she enjoyed special favors, levying her own taxes and exercising judicial power (M. Paparrigopoulo, *Histoire de la civilisation hellénique*, pp. 286-7).

government was too weak to defend them,[43] the provinces could scarcely be expected to sit back in the face of Avar and Slavonic threats and not take protective measures of their own. It is probable that a strong local administration was functioning at the beginning of the eighth century,[44] which would explain the ease with which our hypothetical financial crisis was adjusted. Had the central government refused to sanction emergency measures, it might have discovered that the Athenians were capable of coining the needed money on their own initiative.

Two more emperors rose to brief power and were overthrown before Byzantium knew any permanent peace. Artemius, the successor to Philippicus, seems to have been of imperial stature. "Is erat homo doctissimus," says Cedrenus, and the energy which he showed in reorganizing the army and repairing the city's defenses proves him an able man. Unfortunately he had made powerful enemies among the nobles, and they were only awaiting their chance. Rebellion broke out in Rhodes where the fleet had been sent to attack an Arab division. The victorious insurgents, returning to Constantinople, suddenly realized that they had no ruler to put in Anastasius' place. It shows the depth to which the imperial office had fallen that they should have selected a Thracian tax-collector whom they met by chance and urged upon him the heritage of Justinian and Heraclius. Theodosius III was clever enough to appraise the offer at its true value. History relates that he fled into the mountains to escape his glorious calling, and was only captured with difficulty and dragged to the throne. He was not the man for the times; even his sponsors soon realized that and urged him to resign in favor of his general Leo.[45]

[43] Finlay (*Hist. of Byz. and Gr. Empires*, p. 39) says that communications between capital and provinces were interrupted during the period of anarchy. F. W. Bussell (*Roman Empire*, II, p. 122) holds the same conviction.

[44] The location of a temporary mint at Athens involves the question of *theme* organization. Most authorities believe that the division of the provinces into military districts or *themes* was a fairly early development. Constantine VII (*De Thematibus*, I, 1 [p. 12 in Bekker's edition of the *De Thematibus*, vol. III of the edition of Constantine in the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, Bonn, 1840]) speaks of the Empire as having been cut up in both East and West at the time of Heraclius. Modern historians (E. Stein, "Ein Kapitel vom persischen und vom byzantinischen Staate," *Byz.-Neugr. Jahr.*, I, 1920, pp. 70-87; and A. Vasiliev, *Hist. de l'Empire byz.*, pp. 298-9) agree that the first steps may well have been taken in the seventh century. However, they contend that the system must have evolved slowly. The original organization would have been a purely military one, revising the established boundaries and sometimes including several provinces in one *theme*. For some years at least the provincial civil administration would have continued to function while the military measures were decided by the new *strategos* or governor of the *theme*. Only in the time of Leo and his successors, it is assumed, was complete union of civil and military administrations achieved. If this were indeed the case, there is no contradiction in saying that the capital of the *theme* Hellas was Thebes, as has been commonly held, but that the currency for a part of that *theme* was coined at Athens. The *strategos* and his garrison may have been established on the Cadmea but there was still, in all probability, an organized civil administration in the old capital of Attica.

[45] From the time of Anastasius we have three coins, from that of Theodosius none, which proportions are in accord with the short reigns they commemorate.

During this sorry period of Byzantine history seven emperors had ruled in a period of twenty-one years, four of whom had been killed, and the state of anarchy threatened to become chronic. If the Empire was to survive, someone must come, and quickly, who would be capable of establishing a lasting government. Leo III was to prove equal to the task. Of obscure Syrian [46] parentage he had started his career as a soldier under Justinian II and had gained further experience under the successors of that emperor. His defense of Constantinople against the Arabs in 717 A.D. was a brilliant military feat, but no less important were the reform measures—legal, military, and financial—which are attributed to him.[47] With his religious decrees against the worship of images and the power of the monastic orders we are not directly concerned.[48] They aroused bitter opposition at the time, and the fact that he retained the throne in spite of his unpopularity testifies to the strength of his government.

Regulation of the entire fiscal system is thought to have been undertaken by Leo. This regulation would have been in the direction of centralization, Leo's chief goal, and probably involved an organized system of tax-collecting intended to operate independently and without local control. The emperor himself may have acted as overlord of the treasury in order to be in a position to check more carefully on the functioning of the system. The purpose was to strengthen the Crown at the expense of the provinces; Athens could never have coined her own money once Leo had established his power.[49]

[46] Leo was not an Isaurian. His family had been transferred from Germanicia in Syria to Thrace. In that province Leo is supposed to have met the emperor Justinian and to have won his favor by a timely gift.

[47] Estimates of Leo's ability vary greatly. K. Schenk ("Kaiser Leons III Walten im Innern," *Byz. Zeit.*, V, 1896) eulogizes him as "einer der grössten Männer, die je auf dem römischen Kaiserthron gesessen haben." G. Ostrogorsky ("Über die vermeintliche Reformtätigkeit der Isaurier," *Byz. Zeit.*, XXX, 1929-30) denies that he was responsible for any of the reforms usually accredited to him with the exception of the *Ecloga*, his code of laws. However, the attempt at revision of an antiquated legal system would indicate that Leo was conscious of the needs of his people. Certainly as an experienced general, he must have realized the defects of the military organization, and tried to remedy them. That he was concerned with financial matters is proved by his special levies, in the form of a Sicilian capitation tax and a wall tax for the rebuilding of the Constantinople defenses. There seems no reason to believe that Leo has been overrated. It is unfortunate that hatred of his religious measures led to the destruction of his works, so that the only historical appraisal of Leo is given by violently prejudiced chroniclers.

[48] They may have been actuated by a sincere desire on Leo's part to introduce a greater measure of rationalism into the spirit of the age. The people were incredibly superstitious, believing in dreams and prophecies of all sorts. Almost every emperor from Leontius to Leo had had his sovereignty foretold by supernatural means, and these stories are related in all seriousness by historians like Theophanes and Nicephorus.

[49] Professor Bellinger in reading the manuscript raised the question of whether one should not attribute all sixty-three coins to an Athenian mint. It is true that conditions were unsettled during the reign of Anastasius and during the first years after Leo gained control. The reforms undertaken by the Isaurian were only possible after he had defeated the Saracens. At the same time the smaller quantity of Leo coins, the number of different dies, their superior execution and possibly the regnal symbols on the reverses, make the evidence less conclusive for the later emperor. Yet local minting must certainly be considered as a possibility in trying to reach a tenable explanation of the circumstances under which our money was issued.

An essential part of the fiscal reform must have provided for an increase in the amount of currency. For many years the prevailing tension would have interfered with the orderly striking and circulation of coinage. Our Philippicus pieces may be one reflection of this monetary famine. Another is to be found in the legal codes of the period. In the *Ecloga*, compiled by Leo early in his reign and therefore based on conditions as they were prior to his reforms, the few references to definite sums of money are for small amounts. In the *Ecloga Privata Aucta* of the late eighth century the specified sums are larger and in the *Procheiros Nomos* of Basil I they are comparatively enormous.[50] This means that in 726, the probable date of the *Ecloga*, money was scarce. By the end of Leo's reign, as indicated in later law codes, the situation had been remedied as the result of a definite imperial fiscal policy, increased mineral resources,[51] and the years of undisturbed prosperity which Leo's wise administration had brought to Byzantium. One would expect then to have a great quantity of currency issued by Leo. This is true of the gold pieces, which have survived in large numbers, but heretofore little silver or bronze had been found. Now the Agora group proves that a fair amount of bronze money was issued, judging by the amount which was lost in Athens.

To summarize briefly, the value of this particular collection of coins is both numismatic and historical. Preëminently they are of interest because of their uniqueness and because they add definite new types to the existing fund of Byzantine currency, types which belong to a period from which comparatively little bronze money has survived. In a more restricted sense they help to round out the numismatic history of Athens, filling as they do some part of the lacuna between the reigns of Constantine IV and John Zimisces. In addition, their historical contribution, apart from all speculation and conjecture, is definite. To take a specific example, the fiscal reform measures commonly attributed to Leo III explain in some degree the comparative abundance of his bronze money in Athens; conversely the fact that his money *is* fairly abundant strengthens the case against his opponents who deny that Leo was responsible for improving the financial structure of the Empire. In a more localized field our currency, again by its quantity, substantiates the belief that Athens in the early eighth century was still an important city. For a period whose history is so nebulous, even such scraps of evidence as these cannot be scorned.

MARGARET THOMPSON

[50] E. H. Freshfield (*A Manual of Roman Law*, XVII, 29) translates one passage of the *Ecloga* as imposing a fine of one pound of gold on a man of means whereas a poor man is to lose half his property. If rich and poor were equal before the law as Leo insisted, this would make a man who possessed two pounds of gold wealthy. In the *Revised Manual of Roman Law* (IV, 1) by the same translator gifts of seven pounds of gold are mentioned, and in the *Procheiros Nomos* (XXXIV, 11) slaves bring as much as a gold pound.

[51] A. Andréadès ("De la monnaie dans l'Empire byzantin," *Byzantion*, I, 1924, pp. 83-4) says that the stock of precious metal was increased at the beginning of the eighth century due to the discovery of new mines and a more intensive working of the old ones.

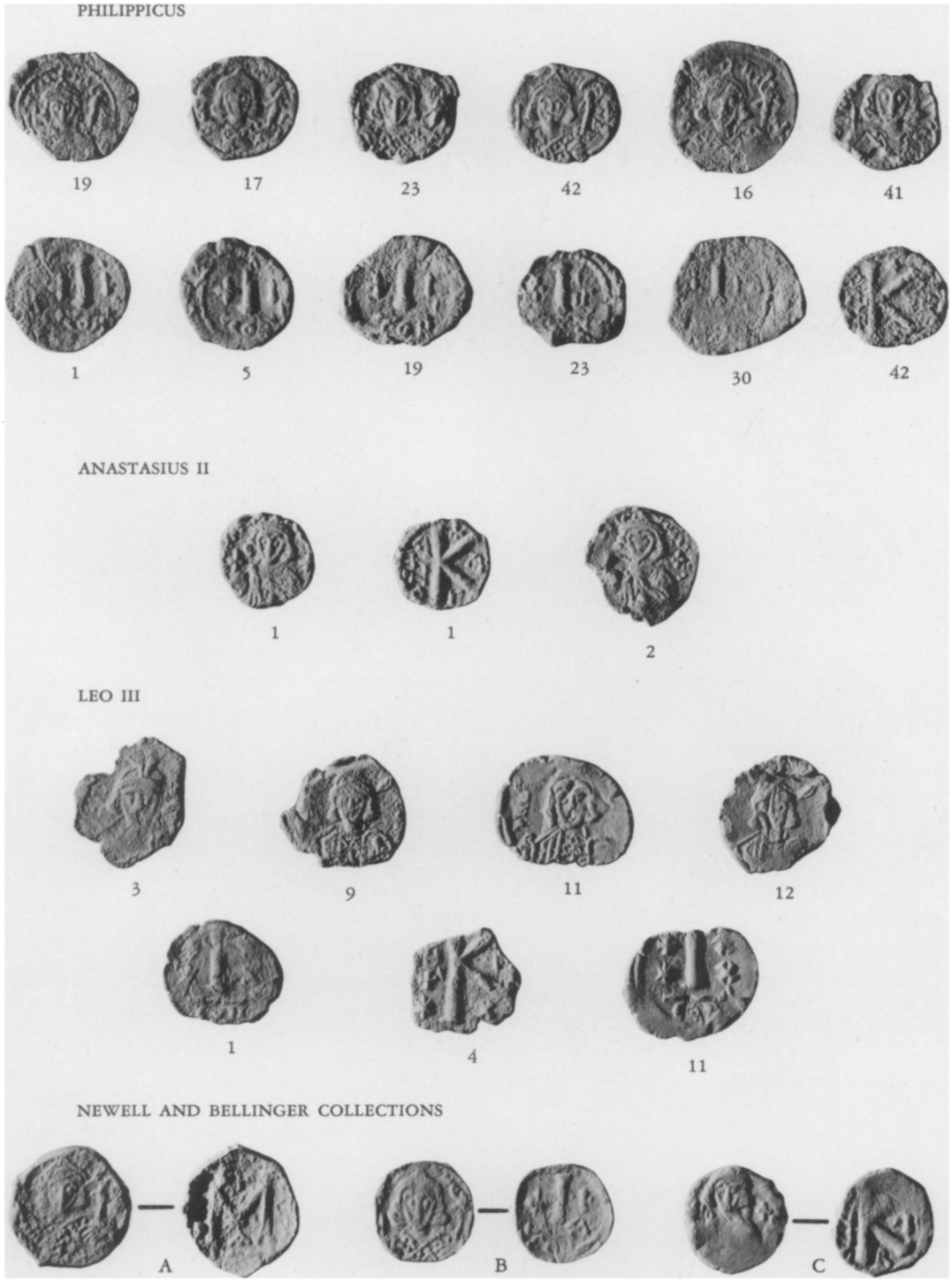

PLATE II. BYZANTINE BRONZE COINS