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# ON THE FOUNDATION OF CONSTANTINOPLE: A FEW NOTES

By A. ALFÖLDI

(Plates I-IV)

The literary sources relating to the foundation of Constantinople can be evaluated afresh if the numismatic material is reconsidered.<sup>1</sup> On this subject O. Voetter,<sup>2</sup> J. Maurice,<sup>3</sup> and O. Seeck<sup>4</sup> have already done valuable work; yet it would bear further study.

## I

## I

Everyone knows the little bronze coins struck on the occasion of the foundation of Constantinople on 11th May, 330, one type of which commemorates Constantinople as the mistress of the seas, while another portrays the old capital, recalling the legend of its origin, with the wolf and twins. The significance of these twin types can be grasped better in a still larger issue struck at the same time. Maurice classed these coins in the larger issue which bear the bust of Rome as having been struck at Rome,<sup>5</sup> and those bearing that of Constantinople<sup>6</sup> as having been struck in the latter city; and this incorrect classification has obscured the parallelism of the type, which was of great importance for imperial propaganda.<sup>7</sup> It is clear that both groups were struck at Rome in the same issue.

Comparison of the busts of Constantinople on the small coins from the Roman mint (pl. II, 1, 2) with the busts on the larger pieces (pl. II, 4, 5) shows so close a resemblance alike in the shape of the helmet, the low relief, the trimmings in thread of gold, and the form of the sceptre and of the outline of the profile, that it becomes clear the larger pieces were also struck in Rome. In the same way the corresponding small coins bearing the bust of Rome from the Roman mint show the same stylistic features as the medallions (pl. III, 1): it follows, therefore, that the larger pieces should be coupled in the same way as the smaller. The common origin of the whole group in Rome can be further demonstrated as follows: we know already that the coin shown in plate II, 5, comes from Rome; the warship on its reverse is coupled (in pl. II, 7) with an obverse of Constantine Junior. The stylistic characteristics of his bust correspond with those of his brother Constantius (pl. III, 9, and IV, 1, 2). It should incidentally be mentioned that these twin types continued to be coined in Rome after the death of Constantine. To prove this it is sufficient to compare the bust of the *nummus centennionalis* (pl. IV, 11) with that of the medallion shown on pl. IV, 12; the modelling of the reverse of the latter is identical with that of the reverse of the related types shown on pl. IV, 13-15. Furthermore, the bust of Constantine II (pl. II, 15, A.D. 337-340) characteristic of the mint of Rome, and its reverse, are closely connected with the reverses of those illustrated on pl. II, 14, 16. These latter are coupled both with the busts of Constantinople and with the reverse types bearing a shorter legend (II, 11) and its counterpart (II, 12). The obverse, therefore, of the latter (Urbs Roma and Constantinople) must have the same provenance, i.e. Rome. This chain of connections is brought nearer completion when we remark that the obverse type shown on pl. II, 12,

<sup>1</sup> I must express the best of thanks to Mr. A. J. N. Wilson, who helped me with the translation of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> O. Voetter, *Monatsblatt der numism. Gesellschaft in Wien* no. 176, 1898, 188; no. 177, 199 ff.

<sup>3</sup> J. Maurice, see note 5.

<sup>4</sup> O. Seeck, *Zeitsch. für Num.* xxi, 1898, 61 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Maurice, *Numismatique Constantinienne* I, 1908, 253, nos. V, VI, VII. Type VII is reproduced here on plate III, no. 5. The explanation of this type by Maurice is mistaken. We should look for the prototype of the allegorical composition in a Hellenistic terracotta of two girls at play lifting a third on their

shoulders. This theme is intended to convey an impression of the gay prosperity of a Golden Age, of which Constantine is the bringer—just as the Panegyric of Nazarius expresses it: 'placidam quippe rerum quietem et profundum urbi otium gentis perdomitae condiderunt. Vacat remissioribus animis delectamenta pacis adhibere.' Cf. Optatus Porphyrianus V, 15 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Op. cit. 2, 1911, 521 ff., nos. VI-VII.

<sup>7</sup> For the mints of the medallions, see now J. M. C. Toynbee, *Roman Medallions* (Numismatic Studies no. 5, New York 1944), 48 ff.

is connected with another reverse type (pl. II, 13); and further that the reverse type (pl. II, 15) connects the bust of Constantinople (pl. II, 16) with the same busts shown on pl. II, 17-18, and thus with the clumsy feminine figures on the reverse of these.

The first essential feature of the commemorative medals is the warship with the legend 'Victoria Augusti', celebrating without doubt the naval defeat of Licinius at Chrysopolis on 18th September, 324. (The simplified edition of these types shows the figure of Victory on the small bronzes, which are connected on their obverse with the personification of Constantinople.) Thus these types express, in the language of art, what is said in the *Origo Constantini* (29): 'Constantinus autem ex se Byzantium Constantinopolim nuncupavit ob insignis victoriae (memoriam).' We know from Themistius<sup>8</sup> that immediately after this naval victory, in all probability at the end of 324, the Emperor began the building of the new capital on a grand scale.<sup>9</sup> In addition, then, the coins bring out the fact<sup>10</sup> that it was after 18th September, but before the tragedy of Crispus and Fausta early in 326, that the renaming of Byzantium as the city of Constantine took place.

These facts have consequences of some significance. Zosimus tells us that Constantine, after he quarrelled with the pagan aristocracy of Rome, started by building a new capital in the neighbourhood of the old Troy;<sup>11</sup> Sozomenus similarly alleges that Constantine wished to found his new city on the plains of Ilium;<sup>12</sup> Zonaras too mentions that Constantine began to build the walls of his city on the promontory of Sigeum before finally deciding to move his seat to Byzantium.<sup>13</sup> But, as we have seen, Constantine desired to perpetuate the memory of his naval victory by the building of a city; the key to his victory was the position of Byzantium. So the alleged interlude in Troas cannot be genuine: before 18 September, 324, Troas belonged to Licinius, and after that date Byzantium became at once Constantinopolis. The alleged proposal for the foundation of a new city in Troas can spring only from a manufactured tradition, the tendentious nature of which is easy to grasp. A whole series of Byzantine authors state that Constantine transferred the arcana of the might of Rome, the Palladium of Troy, to his new capital<sup>14</sup> and hid it under the porphyry column on the top of which stood his own image, made after the statue of Apollo in Ilium.<sup>15</sup> These legendary connections with Troy illustrate the effort made by leading circles in Constantinople to appropriate the ancestor of Rome—Ilium—so that their city should seem more ancient, more noble, and more eternal than the original Rome. It seems that the accounts we have been discussing are part of a more comprehensive legend.

## II

If we review the coins of the Constantinople mint from the end of 324 to May, 330, it strikes us that the special personification of Constantinople, so often used subsequently,

<sup>8</sup> Themist. *Orat.* IV, p. 69, 25 (Dindorf). Cf. Julian, *Orat.* I, 6 (p. 18 Bidez). O. Seeck, *Zeitschr. d. Sav.-St. für Rechtsgeschichte*, rom. Abt. x, 1889, 196 ff. has already noted these passages (and others). See the detailed analyses of all the literary data in Th. Preger, *Hermes* xxxvi, 1901, 336 ff.

<sup>9</sup> Themistius says that Constantine simultaneously invested his son with the purple and his city with a wall. Constantine II became Caesar on 13th November, 324, as a recently found inscription from Amiternum shows (Anibaldi, *N. d. Scavi*, 1936, 96); this cannot mean that the building of the city began exactly on the same day as J. Maurice ('Les origines de Constantinople', *Recueil de Mémoires publié par la Société des Antiquaires de France à l'occasion de son centenaire* 1904, p. 2) argues—and after him Otto Seeck (see below) and Piganiol, *L'Empereur Constantin* (1932), 162. Preger is more accurate (op. cit. 341): 'wir müssen bedenken, dass es dem Rhetor mehr um ein Wortspiel mit ἀμφόθεν als um eine genaue historische Angabe zu tun war'. Cf. O. Seeck, *Rhein. Mus.* LXIII, 1908, 275, and *Geschichte*

*des Untergangs der antiken Welt* III<sup>2</sup>, 429—the complete literature for the problems of the foundation of Constantinople is to be found in E. Gerland, *Byzantinisch-neugriech. Jahrbücher* x, 1934, 104 ff. and E. Gren, *Kleinasien und der Ostbalkan*, 1941, 156 ff. I have not seen Louis Bréhier, 'Constantin et la fondation de Constantinople', *Revue historique* cxix, 1915, 1241 ff. and D. Lathoud, 'La consécration et la dédicace de Constantinople', *Echos d'Orient* xxiii, 1924, 289 ff., xxiv, 1925, 180 ff.

<sup>10</sup> O. Voetter, op. cit., and J. Maurice, op. cit., and *Num. Const.* II, 1911, 482 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Zosimus II, 30, 1.

<sup>12</sup> Sozomen II, 3, 2 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Zonaras XIII, 3, 1 ff. (= 3, pp. 13 ff., Büttner-Wobst).

<sup>14</sup> *Chron. pasch.* ad a. 328 (p. 528 Bonn = *Mon. Germ. Hist. auct. ant.* IX, p. 233); Malal. XIII, 321; Zonaras XIII, 3, 28; Procop. *Bell. Goth.* I, 15.

<sup>15</sup> Zonaras XIII, 3, 25 (= 3, p. 18, 8 Büttner-Wobst).

does not yet appear, and further that this personification is still absent from the coins of the other mints. On the small bronzes of the Constantinople mint (pl. iv, 7, 8) and on the *solidi* of the same mint (pl. iv, 9) only the glory of Dea Roma is celebrated, as is the case also with the contemporary types of the other mints (pl. iv, 10). Constantinople is thus not yet represented as the rival of Rome.<sup>16</sup>

It seems then that, when the victorious Emperor first decided to make use of the excellent position and of the military and commercial potentialities of Byzantium, he assigned to the city a more modest role than later. Of this there are other indications. It appears that he began the rebuilding of the city within the old city walls, and that it was only after an interval of years that he pushed forward the city walls to include a vast area.<sup>17</sup> It must be admitted that during the building of the city it was not possible for the Emperor to hold his court there.<sup>18</sup> But a transfer of his court would not imply a break with the Eternal City—if it did in fact happen. In the relentless wars of the third century it became necessary for the emperors to take up headquarters just behind the endangered frontiers, and thus Milan, Sirmium, Trier, Cologne, and Antioch became great imperial cities. What is more, Nicomedia was already not simply a military headquarters but an administrative centre selected for administrative and political reasons. But we must never forget that, if earlier emperors (as Maximian at Sirmium, Galerius at Serdica and Thessalonica, Diocletian at Nicaea) carried out colossal building programmes, they did not intend thereby to endanger the primacy of Rome as the ideal centre of the Empire—though it was only on the rare occasion of the imperial anniversaries (at Rome) that they entered its gates. It is also obvious that if cities were designated with the name of an emperor (as Caesarea, Augusta or Trajanopolis, Hadrianopolis, etc.) this fact of itself did not make them new seats of imperial rule; similarly, it did not mean such advancement when in A.D. 326<sup>19</sup> Arelate was renamed Constantina or when in 327 a Helenopolis was erected, etc.

Thus it seems that in 324, when Constantine, following the example of Diocletian, sought in north-western Asia Minor a dwelling-place suited by its central position for the government of the whole Empire, we should not assume that he intended to deprive Rome of its time-honoured privileges. That occurred only later; the coins also give some indication of the circumstances of that change.

### III

The following group of commemorative medals of historical importance was rightly appreciated for the first time by O. Seeck.<sup>20</sup>

1. SENATUS: Man standing left, with laurel wreath, in triumphal costume of gold with globe in right hand and sceptre shown by a line of globules with a larger globule as its head. As the legend clearly states, the figure is not the Emperor (as it was said to be by Maurice and by Seeck<sup>21</sup>), but the personification of the Senate—not, however, as hitherto, in the form of a pagan Genius, but rather, out of regard for Christian feelings, as a real senator of consular rank with the insignia of universal power. It seems that most or all of the mints of the Empire produced this type: though it is extremely rare, we have examples from three mints.

(a) Mint mark—S(acra) M(oneta) R(omae); the head of the Emperor, wearing diadem, raised towards the sky. The Berlin example weighs 19.85 gr. (Seeck, op. cit., 22, no. 1, pl. I, 2; the example from the collection of Weifert is a little heavier (20.10 gr.)—see G. Elmer, *Num. Zeitschrift* 1930, p. 42, no. 13, plate II, 4). Pl. I, 1.

<sup>16</sup> The female figure on the golden commemorative medals with the legend *Pietas Augusti Nostri* (J. M. C. Toynbee, op. cit., 183 and 196), is the schematic symbol for any city of the Empire (e.g. J. M. C. Toynbee, pl. vi, 2, viii, 5–6, xxx, 3, xxv, 2, xxxvi), and not the special deity created later for the new capital.

<sup>17</sup> Preger writes: 'but, in spite of this fact, in my opinion it is not advisable to throw overboard

the evidence of the *Chronicon Paschale*, for other indications point to the Emperors having reversed this policy.'

<sup>18</sup> J. Maurice, 'Les origines de Constantinople,' 9.

<sup>19</sup> J. Maurice, *Num. Const.* II, 1911, 179 ff.

<sup>20</sup> O. Seeck, *Zeitschr. für Numismatik* XXI, 1898, 22 ff., 11.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 2, 24; J. Maurice, *Num. Const.* I, 237.

(b) Mint-mark—S(acra) M(oneta) T(hessalonicae); the laurelled bust of the Emperor to the right, in consular gala costume, with globe and eagle-headed sceptre in his hand. The only known example (in the British Museum) weighs 13.20 gr. Pl. I, 2.

(c) Mint-mark—S(acra) M(oneta) N(icomediae); head with diadem on the obverse. This type is only a little heavier than a common *solidus*; the piece described by Maurice (*Num. Const.* I, pl. IX, 4, and vol. III, p. 58 sq., XIII) weighs only 5.29 gr.

2. *EQUES (EQUIS) ROMANUS*. The bare-headed horseman with hand raised in salutation is, of course, not the Emperor, as Seeck supposed, but a knight, as the legend expressly states. We know of this type:

(a) Mint-mark—S(acra) M(oneta) N(icomediae); imperial bust with paludamentum and laurel-wreath; in weight roughly  $1\frac{1}{2} \times \text{solidus}$  (e.g. 6.66 and 6.75 gr.), known in an appreciable number of examples—see Seeck, *op. cit.*, no. III; Maurice, *op. cit.*, III, 58 ff., XI–XII, pl. III, 2; G. Elmer, *Num. Zeitschrift* 1930, 40, no. 3.

(b) Mint-mark—S(acra) M(oneta) T(hes)s(alonicae); imperial bust, eyes raised skywards; the only known example (in the Weifert collection) on the same scale as type (a) (6.34 gr.): G. Elmer, *op. cit.*, p. 41, no. 8, and pl. II, 11.

To these we must add two new types not known to Seeck:

3. *GENIUM P. R.* The Genius of the Roman people wearing the mural crown, and holding the globe and the cornucopiae. The unique example we have bears on the right the mint-mark, S(acra) M(oneta) R(omae), and the diademed head raised to the sky. A slightly damaged silver medallion, 29.8 mm. and 7.62 gr.: *Münzhandlung Basel*, Vente Publique, no. 3 (7th March, 1935), 971, pl. 49. Pl. I, 4.

4. *AETERNA GLORIA SENAT(us) P(opuli)Q(ue) R(omani)*. Constantine and his son Constantius, the second Caesar, in front-view, in a triumphal car drawn by four elephants, with the nimbus around their heads, and their right hand raised in salutation; on each side a licitor. This is a representation of the 'processus consularis' of 1st January. We assume that the type was struck with the bust of Constantine himself, but so far we know it only with the bust of his son, with the weight of two *solidi* (8.99 gr.). *Auction Schulmann* (Amsterdam, 5th March, 1923), Coll. Vierordt, pl. 61, no. 273 ff. (pl. I, 1). Pl. I, 3.

Seeck noticed correctly that the types with the Senate are heavier than the types with the knight—the higher ranking persons having heavier pieces than the lower—although there are quite small medallions with representation of the Senate from Nicomedia.<sup>22</sup> But we have already seen that it is not a case of representation, as suggested by Seeck, of the Emperor in different costumes, but of the different social classes of Rome, and we emphasize the word *Rome*. For these three classes are quite alien to the real elements of the society of Constantine's day, for whom these medallions were intended as gifts: the title of 'Eques' was quite obsolete, and the pagan Genius of the Roman People had lost all significance except at Rome. It thus becomes clear at once that, when the Emperor and the court officials prescribed these types, what they wished to commemorate was the three pillars of the ancient tradition of the city of Rome itself. It is not a matter of accident that the Senate and the Roman People are allowed to bear the symbols of world power—the globe and sceptre: the Emperor acknowledges once more the high aspirations of the old Capital. On the same occasion Constantine, it seems, made the experiment of reorganizing the class of *equites* at Rome, restricting it to Rome—an empty sop, without practical purpose, to the conservative circles of the city.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> O. Seeck, *ibid.*, p. 24; similarly J. Maurice, *Num. Const.* I, 245, and J. M. C. Toynbee, *op. cit.*, 116.

<sup>23</sup> *Cod. Theod.* XIII, 5, 16 (6 February, A.D. 380): 'Idem AAA. Corpori naviculariorum. Delatam vobis a divo Constantino et Juliano principibus aeternis equestri ordinis dignitatem nos firmamus.' Compare the law of Valentinian I, *ib.* VI, 37, 1: 'Ad Mamertinum p(raefectum) p(raetori)o. Equites Romani, quos secundi gradus in urbe omnium optinere volumus dignitatem, ex indigenis Romanis et civibus eliganur, vel his peregrinis, quos corporatis non oportet adnecti. Et quia vacuos huiusmodi

viros esse privilegiis non oportet, corporalium eos iniuriarum et prosecutionum formido non vexet, ab indictionibus quoque, quae senatorium ordinem manent, habebuntur immunes.' A. Stein, *Der römische Ritterstand* (1927), 457 ff., did not perceive the meaning of these edicts; the new knights are not the noble youth. A. v. Sallet, *Zeitschrift für Num.* III, 1876, p. 129, and like him Karl Hönn (*Konstantin der Grosse* (1940), 150) thought that the Senators meant the Senate of Constantinople, but the connection between it and the *Equites* and *Populus*, as well as the chronology, excludes this.

The *eternal glory* of the *Senate and the Roman People*, on pl. 1, 3, celebrates the entry of the Emperor and his third son on their respective consulates on 1st January, 326. The type with the Senate (pl. 1, 3), displaying the consular robes and insignia, also points clearly to this occasion. But the imperial heads raised to the sky appear on the coinage commemorating the Vota Vicennalia celebrated with the greatest pomp in Rome in the summer of 326.<sup>24</sup> So it becomes plain that such commemorative coins, struck on an important political occasion, must have a precise political significance. Homage is paid to the bearers of the old Roman tradition who were pagan. This gesture is made, in part, in an explicitly pagan form at a time when Constantine's Christian policy was already fully developed and aggressive. It must reflect a quite exceptional situation, and an exceptional purpose on his part. It must be remembered that at the time when Constantine made his second expedition against Licinius, he was already stigmatizing polytheism as the religion of his tyrant opponent, in opposition to which stood the Church characterized as the faith of the legitimate Princes; the Church honoured Constantine as the champion of the faith. The Emperor himself declares loudly that he is the executor of the will of the true God against the persecutors of Christ; he officially took the part of the Christian inhabitants of the cities against the pagan, gave the Christian clergy great privileges and endowments, poured out enormous sums for the purposes of the Church, gave preference to Christians in the highest administrative positions, and in Rome itself, in the citadel of paganism, dared to nominate a Christian as the Governor of the City. A year earlier, in 325, Constantine had celebrated his Vicennalia at Nicaea, in completely Christian fashion. He attacked openly the persecutors of the Church and the proselytes of the old religion; on bronze coins of the new mint of Constantine, the new Christian standard of the Emperor—the labarum—transfixes a snake which can only symbolize paganism.

The pagans were thrown into great dismay by these developments, and the Emperor was obliged to guarantee freedom of worship. Presumably the neo-Platonist philosophers were able in the East to influence Constantine in this direction. But the old aristocracy must have been exasperated when the *mores maiorum* were abandoned, while the Church became almost an institution of the State, the Emperor giving ear, not to their words, but to the Bishops. After his victory over Licinius, Constantine transferred his seat far from Italy to the Propontis. He did not yet plan to diminish the authority of Rome as the ideal centre of the Empire; but the magnitude of the scale of building in the new city made it plain that the Emperor had averted his eyes from Rome.

It would seem that after the defeat of Licinius, the Emperor was not so tied as hitherto to the moral and material forces of the West; thus it would be easy for him now to settle accounts with the pagan Senate. But Constantine would not, or could not, break with the Senate. It is almost comical that the Christian historian of Constantine accuses Licinius of having abandoned the traditions of the Roman ancestors; and it may be that this is not a literary commonplace, but a real slogan of the Emperor at the time.<sup>25</sup> That the Emperor did not renounce the title of high priest of the pagan cult shows that he had his eye on the pagan Senate; and the same tendency is apparent in the conceptions of the coin types under discussion. In these coin types may be seen a gesture aimed at reconciling the still pagan Rome, a gesture crowned by the renewal of the rites of the Vicennalia in July, 326,<sup>26</sup> in Rome itself—and in the traditional manner.

But these efforts at reconciliation did not succeed. We know from the pagan Zosimus that Constantine quarrelled with the pagans in Rome. Though the narrative of Zosimus is wholly erroneous in so far as concerns the conversion of Constantine,<sup>27</sup> the quarrel he mentions must be authentic. The Emperor was of an irascible temper, and shortly before this his balance had been disturbed by the murder of his wife and his eldest son. Conse-

<sup>24</sup> Seeck, op. cit., 26. J. Maurice, *Num. Const.* 1, p. cxxxiv, gives the mistaken date of 325, but volume II, 168 ff., states the correct date.

<sup>25</sup> So Laqueur, *Eusebius als Historiker seiner Zeit* (1929) 195 ff. (following Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.* x, 10–24 = Schwartz, p. 896).

<sup>26</sup> O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt*, III<sup>2</sup>, 425.

<sup>27</sup> Zosimus II, 29, 1 ff.; cf. the discussion of this argument by Philostorgius elucidated by J. Bidez, *Byzantion*, x, 1935, 413 ff.

quently he lost control when he saw the pagan sacrifice by the Army on the Capitol on the occasion of his jubilee. He thus drew upon himself the anger of the Senate and Roman People.<sup>28</sup> His decision to turn his back completely on Rome was the fruit of this scandal; and gave a fresh emphasis to the foundation of his new city. The coins also contribute something to an understanding of the new role of Constantinople.

## IV

Even now Constantine did not feel himself sufficiently strong to obliterate the 'mos maiorum' and its vehicle, the Roman aristocracy. He was content to isolate and to restrict to Rome the romantic movement of this aristocracy—a movement which, in the succeeding generation, acquired the highest historical significance, and this principally on account of the policy of Constantine. It will be shown in another study that, even after this turning point, Constantine did not break entirely with the pagan aristocracy. Even now he chose from its number, in most cases, the Governor of Rome. He did not take away from them the coveted distinction of *consul ordinarius*; and he did not deprive their sons of the chance of rising to the highest eminence in the newly created administrative posts, and thus regaining decisive influence; and he was also taking into account the great past of the old Rome, when he explicitly gave second place to the new Rome.

Constantine closed the pagan sanctuaries in the East, one after another. He took away their treasures, and stripped them of their artistic ornaments, wherewith to embellish his new capital: he even demolished more than one of them. But at the same time the cults of the City of Rome remained completely untouched, so that even his successors did not dare to withdraw this exceptional privilege. We hear of pagan manifestations even on the death of this first Christian Emperor. The reverse types of the coinage of Rome, quite unlike the other mints, do not show a single Christian symbol; while here in Rome pagan symbolism occurs, even in the last years of Constantine. On the reverse of the bronze medallion (pl. I, 7), Constantine is sitting in the costume and style of Jupiter, handing the globe to one of his sons—on the globe is standing the bird of rebirth, the phoenix; the young Caesar poses as the new Bacchus, the mythical conqueror of the East, arriving before his divine father with the symbol of victory on his shoulder. At his side is the sacred beast of Bacchus, the female panther, which bows deeply before the master of the world, instinctively acknowledging his majesty.<sup>29</sup>

Thus Constantine left Rome as the 'museum' of the great national past, though it was inseparably connected with the deities of Olympus—but, at the same time, he made of his new capital the Rome of the Christian world. This separation of roles comes out more clearly than has been hitherto supposed in the coins struck on the occasion of the solemn consecration of Constantine on 11 May, 330 (pl. I, 5, 5a). These coins show, beside the bust of Constantinople, the same peculiar sceptre as the silver medallion of Ticinum (pl. I, 6), struck in 315, on which Constantine has not only the monogram of Christ on his helmet, but his sceptre bears on its end the globe on the cross of Christ.<sup>30</sup>

This shape of the sceptre on the commemorative coins is clearly to be seen on the coins from Thessalonica (pl. I, 5), but the same symbol is intended in the sceptres of the coins of other mints with their globular ends (pl. II, 1–2), and also on the bronze medallions of the Roman mint (pl. II, 4–6, 8, 10–11, 16–18, IV, 13–15). This is the more important in that historians, as O. Seeck,<sup>31</sup> have denied that the founder of Constantinople intended to found a Christian capital in his city. But the more the

<sup>28</sup> Zosimus II, 29, 5 and 30; Leo Gramm. p. 84, 19.

<sup>29</sup> The instinctively made προσκύνησις of beasts before the *numen* of the Emperor is a well-known motive in panegyric poetry. See O. Weinreich, *Studien zu Martial* (1928), 74 ff. But this is the first appearance of such a scene

in plastic art—this type was completely misinterpreted by J. Maurice as portraying victory over paganism (*Num. Const.* I, 246 ff.). Cf. also Opt. Porph., *Carmen* IX, 31 ff., and X, 33 ff.

<sup>30</sup> *Pisciculi*, in F. Dölger 1939, 5.

<sup>31</sup> O. Seeck, *Gesch. d. Untergangs d. ant. Welt* III<sup>2</sup> 426 f., and already *Zeitschr. für Num.* XXI, 1898, 60.

Christian character of Constantinople is accentuated, the more singular is the fact that the bust of Rome on the corresponding coins (pl. II, 3, III, 1, 4, 6) is coupled with the she-wolf and the twins of the pagan legend; and this circumstance, as well as the stars of the Dioscuri, and the annunciation of the shepherds (pl. III, 2, 4, 6), accentuate the miraculous element of the myth: the divine ancestors, Mars and Rhea, are present invisibly behind the scenes.

The bronze medallions of the Roman mint might have a further historical interest because they throw fresh light on the plans of Constantine in regard to his new capital. There is no exact reproduction on them of the Tyche of Constantinople,<sup>32</sup> as on the magnificent silver medallions struck, on the same occasion, in Constantinople itself.<sup>33</sup> But they show a consciously chosen countertype to the divine personification of Rome, characterized as it was by a multiplication of divine symbols, as is usual with the pantheistic divinities of the syncretism. We suppose that the creation of this peculiar figure is due to one of the philosophers, mystagogues, or astrologers, who assisted the Emperor by helping to give shape, at the ceremonies of inauguration,<sup>34</sup> to the aims of Constantine. The symbols of the personification of the new city are intended to represent Constantinople, as well as the true conqueror of the world, Rome, as the mistress of peace, victory, and abundance. The type on pl. II, 8, with mural crown, cornucopiae, wings, with feet on a prow, unites the insignia of Rhea, Abundantia, Victoria, and Ceres. Constantinople figures in some medallions as the Victoria Augusti herself (pl. II, 9-10, 17-18), and is shown thus as the bearer of sovereignty. She is placed in strict parallelism with Rome on the twin types (pl. II, 11-12), and so undoubtedly is an expression of the purposes mentioned.

The sudden change in the religious and moral basis of the State involved contradictions. This is not extraordinary. The means of expression of late Roman thought and art were so essentially pagan that the first Christian Emperor, revolutionary and restless as he was, was able only with the aid of pagan experts and in the traditional pagan manner, to create a counterpart to the obstinately conservative old capital, although he consecrated his new capital with a Mass and filled it with his zealous Christianity.

Let us glance once more at both symbolic figures of the old and the new Rome. The first is the product of a magnificent historical past to which there is no parallel, and the second a creation of the alembic of the Emperor's almighty power. The second, though clad in the costume of the ancient world, turns her face towards the future. The former figure, in time-honoured martial attire, looks backwards to her own ancient glory. In the she-wolf accompanying her there finds expression—quite without the designer's intention—the device, so to speak, of the arms of the pagan reaction. This reaction, starting with a great upswing, compelled the best forces of the Church to a bitter struggle, and, though unable to turn the tide, succeeded in preserving for us the treasures of ancient culture.

No living scholar has made a greater contribution to the knowledge of the new Christian Rome than Professor Norman Baynes, in honour of whom these remarks are gratefully presented.

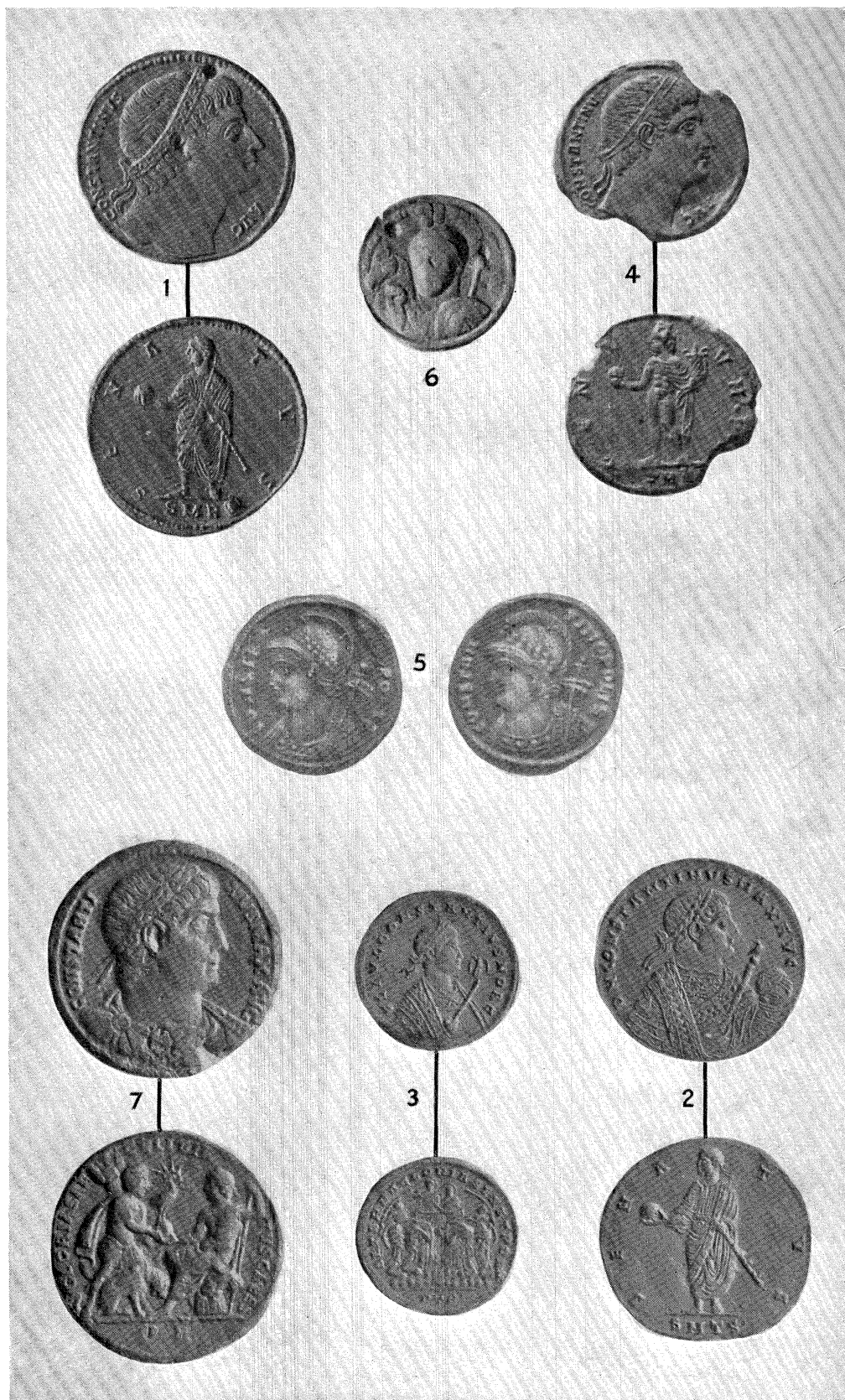
<sup>32</sup> J. Friedländer, *Zeitschr. für Num.* III, 1879, 125 ff.; V. Schultze, *Zeitschr. für Kirchengesch.* VII, 1885, 356 ff.; A. Parisotti, *Archivio della Soc. rom. di Storia patria* XI, 1888, 143; J. Strzygowski, 'Analecta Graeciensia' (*Festschrift zur 42. Versammlung deutscher Philologen v. Schulmänner* 1893), 141 ff.; O. Seeck, *Zeitschr. für Num.*, 1898, 64;

J. Maurice, *Num. Const.* I, p. CLI, 158, II, 520; D. Lathoud, *Echos d'Orient* XXIV, 1925, 183 ff.; L. Cesano, *Studi di Numismatica* I, 1940, 69 ff.; L. Laffranchi, *Numismatica* VII, 1941, no. 2.

<sup>33</sup> J. Maurice, *op. cit.*, II, 1911, 520, no. v = Fr. Gnechi, *I medaglioni romani*, tav. 28, 11-13.

<sup>34</sup> Th. Preger, *Hermes* XXXVI, 1901, 338 ff.





COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLIONS (1-4, 6, 7) AND COINS (5) OF CONSTANTINE I. 1. GOLD FROM ROME (KAISER FRIEDRICH MUSEUM, BERLIN). 2. GOLD FROM THESSALONICA (BRITISH MUSEUM). 3. GOLD FROM TRIER (SPECIMEN IN ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD). 4. SILVER FROM ROME (FORMER WALDECK COLL.). 5. BRONZE FROM THESSALONICA. 6. SILVER FROM TICINUM (KUNSTHIST. MUSEUM, VIENNA). 7. BRONZE FROM ROME (BRERA, MILAN). All except 5 ( $\frac{2}{3}$ )  $\frac{1}{4}$  (see p. 12 ff.)



COINS (1-3) AND BRONZE MEDALLIONS OF CONSTANTINE I AND II (7, 15), COMMEMORATING CONSTANTINOPLE. 1-3 SLIGHTLY LARGER, 4-18 SLIGHTLY LESS, THAN NATURAL SIZE (see pp. 10, 16)



BRONZE MEDALLIONS OF CONSTANTINE I AND CONSTANTIUS (9), COMMEMORATING CONSTANTINOPLE. SLIGHTLY LESS THAN NATURAL SIZE (see pp. 10, 16)





COIN-TYPES COMMEMORATING CONSTANTINOPLE. (1-5), (12-20) SLIGHTLY LESS, (6-8) SLIGHTLY LARGER, THAN NATURAL SIZE  
(see pp. 10, 15)