



## **The Helmet of Constantine with the Christian Monogram**

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## THE HELMET OF CONSTANTINE WITH THE CHRISTIAN MONOGRAM<sup>1</sup>

By ANDREAS ALFÖLDI

(Plates II, III, IV)

The final settlement which began in A.D. 300 between the menacing power of Christianity and the forces of the state, was the unavoidable consequence of a long and slow development.<sup>2</sup> The men who then stood at the head of the Roman Empire were compelled to become the protagonists in the last act of this great drama and, clearly as its final issue may have been indicated from the first, by the positions they adopted materially affected the course of the drama.

As all know, the climax was reached with the conversion of Constantine. Quite recently, however, so eminent a Byzantine scholar as H. Grégoire has disputed the belief that the Battle of the Mulvian Bridge was won in the sign of the Cross,<sup>3</sup> and, as more than one serious student has accepted his view,<sup>4</sup> we shall have to follow in rather closer detail his brilliant description of the political developments of these years. We shall readily admit with him that the account of Eusebius in the *Vita Constantini*, i, 28–30, is a highly-coloured romance and panegyric, marred by rehandling and later interpolation,<sup>5</sup> and quite inconsistent with the information of Lactantius: yet, despite all this, it has a definite kernel of history in it, as I hope soon to show.<sup>6</sup> It is quite impossible, however, to reject the information given by Lactantius, *de mort pers.* 44, 5—before

<sup>1</sup> The Editors are indebted to Mr. Harold Mattingly for kindly undertaking the translation of Dr. Alföldi's contribution.

<sup>2</sup> For a short sketch of this development, see my article in the publication, 25 *Jahre Röm.-germ. Kommission* (Frankfurt.-a.-M., 1929), p. 17 ff.

<sup>3</sup> H. Grégoire, 'La conversion de Constantin,' *Rev. de l'Université de Bruxelles*, xxxvi, 1930, pp. 231 ff., esp. p. 253: see particularly the valuable comments on the Christian prayer of the soldiers of Licinius.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.* pp. 268 f.

<sup>5</sup> A vivid conception of Eusebius' method of composition is given by R. Laqueur, *Eusebius als Historiker seiner Zeit*, 1929.

<sup>6</sup> Against the letter of Cyrillus of Jerusalem, which seems to imply that the appearance of the Cross to Constantine with the *τοῦτο ἔκαστος* was still unknown after the 30th January, 351, we must set the coins of Vetrano, with legend *HO C SIGNO VICTOR ERIS*, attesting a general familiarity with the story, in 350. A heathen prototype of this vision is detected by Grégoire (pp. 250 f.) in the following

passage from the Gallic panegyrist of 310 (*Paneg.* vi, 21, 3–5, p. 217 f.—W. Baehrens) . . . 'ipsa hoc sic ordinante fortuna ut te ibi rerum tuarum felicitas admoneret dis immortalibus ferre quam voveras, ubi deflexisses ad templum toto urbe pulcherrimum, immo ad praesentem, ut vidisti, deum. Vidisti, enim, credo, Constantine, Apollinem tuum comitante Victoria coronas tibi lauras offerentem, quae tricenum singulae ferunt omen annorum.' But the bestowal of *Vota*-wreaths on the Emperor by divinities, is a typical part of the symbolism of the decennial celebrations, e.g. on gold coins of Constantine (Maurice, *Numismatique Constantinienne*, I, pl. xxii, 17) or of Constantius II (Hirsch, xxix, 1910, no. 1463), on which Victory offers a wreath with the inscribed number of the *Vota*; similar wreaths offered by allegorical figures appear on pl. ii, 19, and iii, 20 (A.D. 315). The further quotation from the panegyrist 'vidisti (Apollinem) teque in illius specie recognovisti, cui totius mundi regna deberi vatum carmina divina cecinerunt' is the stock picture of the Emperor as the new beneficent world-ruler and goes back to the 'tuus iam regnat Apollo' of Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*.

the clash with Maxentius 'commonitus est in quiete Constantinus, ut caeleste signum dei notaret in scutis atque ut proelium committeret. facit ut iussus et transversa X littera, summo capite circumflexo, Christum in scutis notat.' This can be no mere Christian interpretation of an official military practice—as Grégoire suggests.<sup>1</sup> He supposes that it was customary to paint the number X in a wreath, as a sign of the imperial *decennalia*, on the shields of the troops and observes that 'the striking likeness between the barred X in laurel-wreath, which is one of the elements that make up the Christian *labarum*, and the numeral X in laurel-wreath, which is the obvious symbol of the *Vota*,' opened the door to variety of interpretation and confusion. Unfortunately the assumption on which Grégoire's whole combination rests is indefensible—the assumption, I mean, that the shields of the troops were, like the sacred *clipei votivi*, ornamented with decennalian wreaths. The real ornaments were the *insignia* of the corps—as we know precisely from the drawings in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, in the silver *Missoria* of Geneva, Madrid and other places. To these coats of arms has been added the Christian monogram—but without the laurel-wreath, which Lactantius does not mention and which is quite out of place there; the 'clypeorum insignia Christus . . . scripserat' of Prudentius is, strictly, true only for the shields of the bodyguards of his own time.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the shield, on which the *Vota*-numbers are set on the coins, has nothing to do with the army: it belongs to Victory, who herself inscribes it. On this shield, too, no wreath ever appears.

We have, then, no reason to doubt that the army of Constantine had 'safeguarded against cut and thrust' their shields with the letters of the name of Christ. It is logical to suppose that the Emperor himself displayed the sign, under the protection of which he had placed himself, in one place or another. If we take Eusebius *Vit. Const.* i, 31, 4 (p. 22, Heikel) literally, he set it on his helm then; later he certainly wore it there—'καὶ κατὰ τοῦ κράνους φέρειν ἔωθε καὶ τοῖς μετὰ ταῦτα χρόνοις ὁ βασιλεὺς'. Prudentius (*Contra Symm.* i, 489) too had heard that in this fight 'ardebat summis crux addita cristis.' We can further approach this question from another side.

It has long been recognised that the appearance of the monogram of Christ on the Emperor's helmet is confirmed by its representation on a number of coin-types. O. Voetter was the first to attempt on sound principles to determine the dates of these coin-types, in his

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* pp. 253 f., 257 f.

<sup>2</sup> Prudentius, *Contra Symm.* i, 488. The Christian monogram, filling the whole surface of a shield, occurs later on monuments as the special badge of Life-Guards of the highest rank, e.g., on the Column of Arcadius (Freshfield, *Archaeologia*, lxxii, pl. xvii, xx), on a silver bowl of Constantius

(Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen*, 1929, p. 71, fig. 26), on a diptych of the fifth century (*ibid.*, pl. xlv), on a mosaic of San Vitale at Ravenna, etc. Similarly, the *labarum* was the standard of the Bodyguards (cf. N. H. Baynes 'Constantine the Great and the Christian Church,' *Brit. Acad. Proc.* xv, note 33).

pioneer essay on 'the first Christian symbols on Roman coins.'<sup>1</sup> Since then Jules Maurice has discussed them exhaustively,<sup>2</sup> and, finally, I myself have had occasion, in working over the contents of a large hoard, to determine exactly the order of these products of the mint of Siscia at a date just after A.D. 317.<sup>3</sup> It appeared then that the monograms on the vertical bar of the imperial helmet and on the bowl of the helmet itself (pl. iv, 17) were only rendered clearly on the very first series, at the very beginning of the issue of the rev. VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC. PERP., that is to say, only on dies which were still copying exactly the original model of the central administration. In contrast to them, the vast mass of coins in the following period showed in place of the letters of the name of Christ nothing but tiny stars; it goes without saying that this formal degeneration in copying makes no difference to the meaning of the prototype. What we have here, then, is always the helmet with the Christian monogram, even when in place of the ✱ feeble imitations, stars and points, appear—and this will be true not only of Siscia, but of the parallel issues in all the Western mints, in which we find nothing but these stars or similar substitutes for the monogram (pl. iv, 14–20), but their contemporaneous appearance and uniform character illustrate clearly enough their origin from the same prescription of the central administration, which in Siscia was interpreted in a Christian sense.<sup>4</sup> It has not so far been observed, to the best of my knowledge, that this helmet, which appears in company with yet other reverse types of the years 315–324 (pl. II, 21 and iv, 21–24), diverges completely from the other conventional representations of helmets of the preceding period as of this period itself; the round bowl-shape, strengthened by horizontal and vertical bar, as also its ornamentation with a variety of precious stones, is an entirely new and original departure. Nor can it be mere chance that this helmet is reserved for the coins of Constantine himself; its use for Crispus (pl. iv, 18) in an unusually rich series of variants of obverse portrait at the mint of Lugdunum is a solitary exception and will not have been authorised by the higher authorities.

<sup>1</sup> *Num. Zeitschr.* 1892, p. 27 ff. (offprint); cf. also *ibid.* 1920, pl. 8–9. That Count de Salis had here, as so often, been the first to detect the truth, may be gathered from his remarks in J. Wordsworth, *Dict. of Christian Biography*, I, 1877, p. 648.

<sup>2</sup> J. Maurice, *Numismatique Constantinienne*, vol. II, 1911, pp. cviii, 330 ff., 338 ff. Victor Schulze in *Zeitschr. f. Kirchengesch.* xlv, 1925, pp. 321–337, omits to test the evidence of coins, giving only a brief survey based on Maurice. Maurice himself in his *Constantin le Grand*, p. 27 ff., does not offer any fresh analysis of them, nor do the many other writers who deal with the conversion of Constantine—whom I therefore omit here. I have had no chance of seeing M. Schulzberger, *Le symbole de la croix et les monogrammes de Jésus chez les premiers chrétiens* (Liege, 1926). All the

literature is given by N. H. Baynes, 'Constantine the Great and the Christian Church,' in *Brit. Acad. Proc.* xv, note 33; to his list may be added a recent paper by L. Laffranchi 'Il problematico segno della Croce sulle monete precostantiniane di Aquileia' in *Aquileia nostra* III (1932).

<sup>3</sup> A. Alföldi, 'Il tesoro di Nagytétény,' *Riv. It. di Num.* 1921, pp. 7 ff., 45 ff. The date follows from the fact that these coins are not quite the first after the nomination of the Caesars on March the first, 317. (The controversy over the date of the nomination has been settled by E. Stein, in *Zeitschr. f. neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* xxx, 1931, pp. 177 ff.)

<sup>4</sup> Pl. IV, II, 17–20 are from Vienna; 12–13, 21–24 from Berlin; 25–27 from Budapest.

The fact, too, that it is sometimes provided with the usual falling horse-hair plume, which here replaces its proper upright feather (pl. II, 21 and IV, 22, 23), can only be put down to the inaccuracy of the engraver.

What more natural than that Constantine—bidden 'to imitate in gold and precious stones' the sign of his Lord, that promised him victory (Eus. *Vit. Const.* i, 3), should surround that blessed emblem on his helmet with jewels of many a hue? We chance, however, to learn from a Gallic panegyrist<sup>1</sup> that, as early as 310, Constantine possessed a helmet adorned with gems such as we see him wearing on the coins, 'galeam auro gemmisque radiantem et pinnis pulchrae alitis eminentem'; when still a boy—it is said—he had received either it or its like from Fausta as a *sponsale munus*. In the battle of October 28th, 312, too, 'fulget nobilis galea et corusca luce gemmarum divinum verticem monstrat' (*Nazarii Paneg.* 29, 5, p. 178—W. Baehrens). This mode of decoration, then, is part of the stock of the new oriental magnificence of the court, which developed, if not in direct imitation of Persia, as is often said,<sup>2</sup> out of the final establishment of the Hellenistic-Oriental theocratic monarchy. Wrong as the Christian writers were in asserting that in old days only the purple cloak distinguished the emperors from ordinary mortals, there is still no doubt that it produced an immense effect all over the Empire, when Diocletian 'primus . . . ornamenta gemmarum vestibus calceamentisque indidit'<sup>3</sup>—that is to say, made this barbaric splendour the rule of the imperial wardrobe.<sup>4</sup> I hope soon to show what a large part in the spreading of the so-called 'polychrome' style of decoration in the fourth century was taken by the fashion of the imperial court. We have next to determine the date at which the new type of helmet with the monogram first appears on the coins.

The direct model of the coins of just after 317, which we have just discussed, is an issue of the mint of Trier (pl. IV, 13, cp. 14-16);

<sup>1</sup> *Paneg.* vii, 2 (p. 224—W. Baehrens).

<sup>2</sup> I hope soon to show, in a work on the introduction of Persian court ceremonial into Rome, that the charge that Diocletian was aping the Persians is an ancient commonplace—a conventional attacking motive in rhetorical invective; further, that Diocletian was not developing any new conception, but only rounding off a long course of evolution. [The main results of my investigations have been anticipated by Delbrueck in his brilliant study 'Des spätantike Kaiserernat' in *Die Antike* viii, pp. 1-21.] On the other hand the influence of Persia, coming through the Hellenistic basis of the 'Dominatus,' is really present, as Kornemann (in Gercke-Norden, *Einleitung in die Altertumswiss.*, ii, 2, 298 ff.) has in general made clear. An important parallel can be drawn for the evolution of art. The works of Strzygowski first opened our eyes, then Rostovtzeff (*Iranians and Greeks*, 1922) proved the central importance of Iran. Later H. Koch, in *Probleme der Spätantike* (1930, pp. 47 ff.), has given

an admirable sketch of the influence of Persia on Roman imperial art. He had already emphasised the point that the administration of the imperial court with its ceremonial corresponded to this orientalising tendency in art.

<sup>3</sup> Eutrop. ix, 26. On the same source draw Victor, *Caes.* 39. 2. 4, Hieronymus, *Chron.* 226a (Helm), Ammianus, xv, 5. 18 (shortened), Lydus, *de mag.* i, 4, *Anon. Matrit.* p. 551, Bauer; cp. also *Vita Alex. Sev.* 18. 1-3 in the *Historia Augusta*, and, particularly, *Epit. de Caes.* 35, 5 (about Aurelian).

<sup>4</sup> The emphasis on *primus* depends on the literary 'inventor' motif. As a matter of fact Commodus already had a wreath set with jewels (Dio Cass. 72, 17, 3) and apparently Caligula before him (Suet. *Calig.* 52) had worn clothing with similar ornamentation; for the literary scheme, cp. for the time my remarks in *Zeitschr. f. Num.* xxxviii, 1928, pp. 160 ff.

this belongs to a small series which stands out sharply against the general coinage of the time. This special series,<sup>1</sup> which begins in thoroughly good silver and then goes on into billon or silver-washed bronze (pl. iv, 11-13), consists of three types (all with mint-mark P TR).

- (1) *obv.* IMP · MAXIMINVS AVG ., bust of Maximin II, as Sol, in radiate crown, l., r. hand raised, globe in l.  
*rev.* SOLI INVICTO COMITI, Sol front, in quadriga.
- (2) *obv.* IMP · LICINIUS AVG ., bust of Licinius I, as Jupiter, laureate, l., holding thunderbolt and sceptre.  
*rev.* IOVI CONSERVATORI, Licinius seated on back of eagle, l.
- (3) *obv.* IMP · CONSTANTINVS AVG ., bust of Constantine I, wearing helmet of the monogram-bearing type, cuirass and mantle, holding spear over shoulder in r. hand and sword with eagle's head on hilt in l.<sup>2</sup>  
*rev.* VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC · PERP ., two Victories setting on an altar shield inscribed VOT · P · R..

The first two of these coins were still struck in the superior metal at Arelate as well, but, as the type of Maximin Daza never reached this mint,<sup>3</sup> the Trier issue too can only have appeared just before his death at about the end of 312 or early in 313.<sup>4</sup> It comes to this, then, that we have before us a record of the time immediately after the Battle of the Mulvian bridge—a document which is enhanced in value by the fact that it comes from the capital of Constantine. It cannot be without intention, then, that on the three reverses of the three colleagues, by the side of 'Jupiter Conservator' and 'Soli Invictus Comes (Augusti),' the regular companion of the latter, 'Mars Conservator,' is suppressed, and in his place, a colourless scene appears with a commonplace expression in symbol of the recurrent imperial vows.<sup>5</sup> On the obverses too we find, correspondingly,

<sup>1</sup> Discovered by O. Voetter, *Num. Zeitschr.* n.f. x, 1917, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Voetter, *op. cit.*, thinks that Constantine is here equipped as Mars. But the representations of Mars of this same period at Trier (Voetter, *Num. Zeitschr.*, 1918, pl. 29) show, as we might expect, the conventional helmet only; the reverse of our coin, too, bears no reference to Mars, whereas the other two reverses both name and depict the gods of the obverses. Nor must we forget that these gods represent grades of rank in the tetrarchy and, as Constantine had been nominated by the senate on October 29th, 312, senior Augustus (Lact. *de mort. pers.*, 44. 11, and Euseb. *hist. eccles.* ix, 10. 1) he could never in such a context have chosen the part of the fast fading Mars, but if any god, only one of the first rank. (In any case the precedence

of Licinius as Jupiter over Daza as Sol is remarkable. See also below).

<sup>3</sup> See Voetter, *Num. Zeitschr.* 1917, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Constantine must have continued to strike for Maximin some considerable time after the capture of Rome, for he first appointed him consul for 313 and in that year long avoided a break with him: cp. O. Seeck, 'Die Anfänge Constantins des Grossen' in *Deutsche Zeitschr. f. Geschichtswiss.*, p. 224 n. 2, and p. 258.

<sup>5</sup> The appearance of *two* Victories does not imply reference to more than one emperor—the same two goddesses appear for emperors, like Florian and Probus for example, who reigned without colleague. The epithet *laetae* is given, because a victory from ancient times (cp. Livy, x, 45, 1, etc.) is regarded as 'laetitia publica' or 'gaudium publicum' and

only two. God-Emperors, Jupiter-Licinius and Sol-Maximin; Constantine, the third, is already unwilling to appear here as a god. The reason he cannot so appear is that he bears on his head the new type of helmet, which, as his subjects knew, bore on it the emblem of a religion, that would not tolerate the payment of divine honours to mere man. The clear and full expression of the monogram was almost impossible here because of the minute scale of the helmet. Even afterwards, when the helmet was shown on a larger scale at Siscia, the only remedy was to make the cross-bar of the helmet unnaturally broad, in order to squeeze in the  $\Sigma$  on it.

Nor are there wanting from this same period other public demonstrations of the conversion of Constantine to Christianity. The notice in Eusebius of a victorious statue in Rome, with cross in hand and corresponding legend, would, if correctly dated, be the nearest to our coins.<sup>1</sup> In Trier,<sup>2</sup> where our coins were struck, at the time of their issue a panegyric was delivered on Constantine, in which the orator speaks of the 'deus,' who gave the Emperor heart for his war with Maxentius, and of the 'mens divina,' which revealed itself to him and even asserts 'non dubiam te, sed promissam divinitus petere victoriam.' 'Said by a heathen, but by a heathen who knew very well what Constantine liked to have said about him'—to quote Seeck's excellent comment.<sup>3</sup>

This first appearance of the Christian 'dei gratia imperator' on the coinage of Trier is, one must admit, very cautiously indicated, and is actually obscured by its being in company with two heathen 'dei et domini.' Even when a year or so later, 314,<sup>4</sup> the cross was for the first time placed on coins, it only appears as a modest symbol by the figures of 'Sol Invictus' and 'Mars Conservator.'<sup>5</sup> None

is publicly celebrated (cp. Tertull. *Apologet.* 35, *Cod. Theod.* vii, 11. 1-5, etc.). In earlier times the attempt was made to link up the *decennalia* with actual victories (cp. coins of Caracalla, C. ii, 647, rev. imperial title and VIC · PART ·, Victory seated by trophy inscribing 'VO. XX' on shield), but the emperor of later times, 'semper victor' 'ubique victor' no longer needs this link with actuality. There is, however, on the Arch of Constantine (in Rome) a connexion in symbolism between the *decennalia* and the conquest of Maxentius, and we are justified in asking if our reverse too may not celebrate the same defeat. Garrucci (*Esame critico e cronologico della num. Cost. portante segni di cristianesimo*, 1858, p. 19) had already pointed out that the victory of Constantine and his *decennalia* are celebrated by Lactantius *de mort. pers.* 1, 3, and 52, 4, as 'triumphus Dei' and, 'pax post annos decem plebi suae data,' which 'laetificat' the Christians too.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. V. Schultze, *Zeitschr. f. Kirchengesch.* vii, 1885, pp. 343 ff. (We should have welcomed a discussion of the inscription on this statue in the excellent article by A. Stein on *Röm. Inschriften in der antiken Literatur*, Prague, 1931). A very

similar demonstration on the part of Constantine still exists in the shape of his Arch and its inscription. For the details see N. H. Baynes, 'Constantine the Great and the Christian Church,' *Brit. Acad. Proc.* xv, notes 35 and 36.

<sup>2</sup> Schanz-Hosius-Krüger, *Gesch. d. röm. Litt.* iii, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> *Inc. paneg. (xii) Constantino Aug. d.*, 2, 4; 2, 5; 3, 4; cp. O. Seeck, *Gesch. d. Unterg. d. ant. Welt*, i, 4 (1922), p. 473 and earlier, *Die Anfänge Const.*, p. 233, n. 1.

<sup>4</sup> The extreme rarity of the cross on the obverse of Licinius (cp. Voetter, *Die ersten chrstil. Zeichen*, p. 3, and Maurice, *op. cit.* ii, pp. 249 ff.) proves that Licinius only shared in the coinage at its very beginning or at its very end; most of it, therefore, falls into Constantine's war against him.

<sup>5</sup> The incompatibility of the ideas involved can hardly have failed to attract attention. Can we see the intention of achieving with the cross beside the idols the sort of success that is reported in the story in Zonaras (xiii. 3, p. 128, Dind.)? Constantine, we hear, had had a famous statue of Apollo studded with nails from the Redeemer's coffin, to deprive it of its magic force.

the less, however, the presence of the 'immortale signum' on these public documents is decisive and could not have occurred without the initiative or consent of the ruler,<sup>1</sup> any more than the rapid disappearance of the heathen gods from the coin-types in the following years could have happened against his will.

That the ruler should take sides in the religious divisions of these years of civil war was unavoidable. The fact appears as clearly in the wars between Daza and Licinius and Licinius and Constantine, as in the clash with Maxentius.<sup>2</sup> It was in vain that Constantine in the traditional manner<sup>3</sup> tried to show himself as the representative of old Roman freedom, his opponent as a tyrant of oriental stamp. The original meaning of these ideas was so outworn that they forgot to represent the 'restitutor libertatis' as a plain citizen in toga, 'optimus princeps,' and replaced that figure by an Hellenistic world-ruler with the zodiac (pl. III, 4, 18). On the other hand the dynastic principle, though utilised fully as means of propaganda, was no longer trenchant enough. In place of legitimisation by juristic proofs a religious sanction had to be found in this epoch of culmination of religious thought.

The jewel-bedecked helmet of our Emperor appears again in a showy series of commemorative coins of A.D. 315, which we have reconstituted in an appendix (see below); here, too, irregularly, it is provided with a long falling crest.<sup>4</sup> Beside this appearance of a (probably) Christian element, 'Sol Invictus' (pl. I, 21) still represents the religion of their fathers. Apart from him, the universal world-ruler — 'Rector totius orbis,' 'Victor omnium gentium,' 'Victoriosus semper,' with his 'Victoria perpetua' and

<sup>1</sup> The intentions of the government in its use of the Christian symbol on coins is clearly seen in the signature of the reverse of circa 320, 'Virtus exercit. Vot. xx.' with trophy. On these coins the monogram appears at the same time and always in the form ✠ in the mints of Thessalonica, Siscia, Ticinum and Aquileia. This could obviously be no mere act of a 'praepositus sculptorum' as J. Maurice (*op. cit.* ii, pp. 339 ff.) supposes, but can only represent a regulation of the central government.

<sup>2</sup> Beside the main works quoted in Grégoire, *op. cit.* pp. 270–272, cp. for an estimate of the religiously sensitive, but unsentimental Constantine, the clever characterisation in Max Vogelstein, *Kaiseridee-Romidee und das Verhältnis vom Staat und Kirche seit Konstantin*, Breslau, 1930. See also R. Laqueur in *Probleme der Spätantike*, 1930, pp. 1 ff., and W. Weber, *ibid.*, p. 67 f., 91 f., N. H. Baynes in *Menschen die Geschichte machten*, 1931, 1, pp. 205–9. I may add subsequently the extremely useful and excellent introduction to all the widely scattered modern literature on the subject by N. H. Baynes, 'Constantine the Great and the Christian Church,' *Brit. Acad. Proc.* xv.

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Euseb., *Vit. Const.* i, 40, Lact. *de mort. pers.*, *Inc. paneg.* ix, 2, 4; 3, 2 (p. 291—W. Baehrens), etc.: other passages and inscriptions in Groag, P-W art. 'Maxentius' (Regierung), col. 2481, par. 1. Here, we must admit, it is a mere justification after the event to stamp the defeated adversary as a tyrant: before October 28th, 312, such a change had little weight. For the language, cp. my notes in *Zeitschr. f. Num.* 1930, pp. 5 f. Laqueur, *Eusebius als Historiker seiner Zeit.*, p. 680 ff., has shown how the church historians connected the revival of old Roman liberty with the help of the Christian God: the same thought is emphasized in the inscription of the Arch of Constantine.

<sup>4</sup> The row of dots on the top of the helmet itself might represent such blobs as we see, for example, on the Stablesian helmet of Leyden. But the second row of dots on the plume above could have no such meaning. Perhaps we shall end by thinking of a kind of double nimbus, as seen, for example, commonly on coins of Hadrumetum, with pearls at the end of the rays, as, e.g., on the royal portrait of Kutscha in A. v. Le Coq, *Bilderatlas zur Kunst u. Kulturgeschichte Mittelasiens*, p. 43, ill. 20, pl. ii, 25. There are traces of the same little round blobs on contemporary bronze of Ticinum.



'Pax aeterna' dominates the types; he brings in the new age of gold, 'Felicia tempora.' We have already seen how new life was given to the old catch-word of 'libertas' by the thought of the Saviour-Emperor. Even the old lay figures of 'Concordia,' 'Fortuna,' 'Liberalitas' and 'Fides' make an impression of out-of-dateness, while, beside them, the new bust (pl. II, 20), seen from the front in its nimbus, almost foreshadows the forms of the Byzantine Middle Age.

Our helmet type, as indication of the Christian disposition of the Emperor, disappears after 324, probably because from that time onwards the portraits with eyes uplifted now mark the 'religiosissimus Augustus,'<sup>1</sup> and because the introduction of the diadem ousts all helmeted types of every kind. But the problem of the helmet with monogram has yet another side, which I hope some day to illustrate, though here I can only touch it in passing. The coins of Theodahad copy this helmet of Constantine with two stars to right and left of the cross-bar,<sup>2</sup> but with a dot in place of the plume. The helmet has here become a symbol of lordship—as it is still in the Egbert coronation-formula;<sup>3</sup> the latter proves that as late as the seventh century a helmet can still represent the crown among the German royal insignia. The further question then presents itself, whether there is any connexion between the type of crown with circular band and two cross-bars and our helmet. And again we shall have to trace how this imperial helmet more and more set the fashion in the fourth century and, multiplied again and again in the State 'fabricae', found even wider extension as the 'Spangenhelm' of the Germans.

#### APPENDIX.

The reconstruction of the issues in base metal in the age of Constantine is rendered fairly simple by the exact mint-marking of the different series. For the gold, the determination of date in the absence of such mint-marks becomes much harder and the exact comparison of obverse dies—which is here the way of progress—has not yet been seriously attempted. That is why, in as valuable a book as Maurice's, the *solidi* of a single issue of Ticinum<sup>4</sup> of great wealth and historical and artistic interest, have been scattered over diverse periods of the reign of Constantine<sup>5</sup> (see the tables below).

The isolation of this series is rendered easier by the fact that all the preceding issues of gold differ from it in weight and diameter. And indeed the heavy *solidi* of c. 6 gm. of

<sup>1</sup> Cp. here, my remarks in *25 Jahre Röm.-germ. Komm.*, p. 42 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. e.g. F. F. Kraus, *Die Münzen Odovacers und des Ostgotenreiches in Italien* (1928), pl. ix-x, no. 29 ff. Cp. also the Totila coins, *ibid.*, pl. xiii, no. 53-63.

<sup>3</sup> I owe this reference to my friend Zoltán von Tóth.

<sup>4</sup> That there is no question here of Tarraco, as Voetter, Maurice and others have always maintained, is absolutely certain: I hope later to publish a survey of the 'Ticinum-Tarraco controversy.'

<sup>5</sup> For a sound general appreciation of the truth, see G. Elmer, *Num. Zeit.*, 1930, p. 19, where nine types in the series are recorded.

the period just after the death of Chlorus in July, 306<sup>1</sup> (pl. II, 1-3), are quite distinct in general character from the gold series, which Maurice rightly begins in the interval from March, 307, to June, 309 (see pl. II, 4—Milan). Quite distinct from these are the light (c. 4 gm.) and small pieces<sup>2</sup> (pl. II, 6-7, London and Weiffert Coll.), which in point of style fall in with the bronze of 309-313; compare with pl. II, 5, the crudely drawn, characteristically broken line of the nose and the exaggeration of the nostrils.<sup>3</sup> On these follows yet a further class: small pieces, of very regular finish, weighing c. 4½ gm. with references to the *Decennalia* (pl. II, 10-11; 13 is a multiple). The line of the profile is just the same as that in the previous issue and in the small bronze, as on pl. II, 8-9. As in 315 quite a different kind of gold piece was struck, and as one can hardly admit that two forms were issued contemporaneously, I would suggest that this series begins as early as 314.<sup>4</sup> Whereas the new issue of 315 betrays the hand of the new engraver, the artists of the type 'Victoriae laetae princ. perp.' now produce the same type in bronze (pl. II, 12) after the appointment of the Caesars in 317, just when their 'vota suscepta' gave the type a new 'raison d'être.' The rich series of *solidi*, beginning in 315, may be arranged by portraits as follows:—

(a) The *solidi* on pl. II, 14, 22, 23 and III, 1-10 have finely modelled head, without contour lines as before; the eyebrows too are only slightly indicated. The wide open eye with its upward glance shows a point in the hollow of the pupil as on contemporary portrait-statues. Noticeable too is the fairly regular finish of the bust; the tie-strings of the diadem fall in an obtuse angle on the neck.

(b) The heads on pl. III, 11-17, 22, form a second group, in which the modelling has already lapsed from the original model. It is just this that accounts for the outlining of the nose with a contour line, the emphasising of the eyebrows by a row of dots; the face is now squarer, the finish of the bust brought more to a point in front, the ties of the diadem rest in bows at right angles on the neck.

(c) The wearing out of the master-dies, from which the obverse dies were produced,<sup>5</sup> then led to a less distinct portrait, as in pl. III, 18, 19. The copying of such inferior types thus occasioned the appearance of a new type of portrait.

(d) The same reverses, that go with the last class of obverses, are also linked with the obverse of the type shown on pl. III, 23, IV, 1-3—characterised by a pointed finish to the bust, a more hooked nose and less rigid ties of the diadem. The joint reverse types such as pl. III, 23, IV, 1, 3, are also known for Crispus (pl. IV, 4-6) and for Licinius, who himself seems only to have been admitted to the issue after the appointment of the Caesars. That means that we have now reached the year 317.

(e) Probable, but not quite certain, is the attribution to this class of obverse of the type pl. III, 20, 21 (with large nose).<sup>6</sup> Apart from this regular head, laureate, r., in 315 a series of ostentatious busts was designed (pl. II, 15-21). The connexion of these with those we have just listed is proved in almost every case by identity of reverse types:

<sup>1</sup> As yet we know of no gold of Constantine of this period, but as contemporary bronze was struck with his obverse, we have a right to expect gold as well. Maurice, *op. cit.* ii, p. 217, no. vi, has NOSTROR for NOSTR, in error, at the end of the reverse legend; he does not give the mint-mark SMT on p. 219, no. vii; on p. 218, no. v 2. he had already conjectured that the piece pl. II, 3. (Milan) existed.

<sup>2</sup> Maurice, *op. cit.* ii, p. 242, no. xv.

<sup>3</sup> To judge from the size and weight there is one more type that ought to belong to this or the next issue—the reverse PERPETVA VIRTVS AVG.,

illustrated in *Evans' Sale Catalogue*, Geneva, 1922, pl. vi, 178. Maurice, *op. cit.* ii, p. 244, no. xx (from Banduri).

<sup>4</sup> Maurice, *op. cit.* ii, p. 261, no. ix, attributes them to 317-320, but after 315 'vot x' would be meaningless.

<sup>5</sup> I learn from A. Barb that many more obverse than reverse dies are used up.

<sup>6</sup> The similarity of the representation of the emperor on reverse of pl. III, 21, compared with III, 14, 22, as also the identity of the female figure, pl. III, 20, and pl. II, 19, are also in favour of this attribution.

(cp. pl. II, 17 and III, 7; pl. II, 18 and III, 15; pl. II, 20 and 22; Vierordt Sale, no. 2654 and our pl. II, 14; pl. II, 15 and III, 4 and 18).<sup>1</sup>

The date of the first issue of these commemorative coins is assured by numerous indications in the reverse legends; on pl. II, 16, the numbers of the imperial titles (XI imp., IIII cos, p.p.p.) must be detached from 'Liberalitas' and then give the same date as the rest.<sup>2</sup> A parallel issue appeared at the same time in Trier, with many identical reverse-types; many types occur again in yet other Western mints.

In order to give a lower limit of dating to our issues we may make the following observation on the succeeding issues of *solidi*:<sup>3</sup> The same fabric, as appears in our issue, is seen in pl. IV, 7 (Hermitage), which, as it mentions the '*vicennalia*,' cannot be earlier than 324; its portrait is that of the numberless issues of the time in bronze. I have unfortunately not seen the specimen in the Caylus Collection, with '*felix processus cos. VI Aug. n.*' which would establish for us the portrait of A.D. 320. Then in 327 begins an issue of gold of larger diameter (pl. IV, 8, 9, Budapest and Weiffert)—which no one could confuse with the earlier issues; finally, the last *solidi* of Ticinum with the eyes raised to heaven are so completely distinct from the last-mentioned class, that they need no further discussion here.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Multiple pieces were issued in this special issue. One would like to include here the great gold medallion of the Beistegui Collection (Maurice II, pp. 238 ff.), but as it appears that there was no coinage for Licinius in 315, the mention of two Augusti in the legend '*felix adventus Augg. nn.*' tells against it.

<sup>2</sup> L. Laffranchi, '*L XI anno imperatorio di Constantino Magno, Atti della Pontif. Accad Rom. d'archaeologia*, 1921. This solution is disputed by such eminent historians as E. Stein, *Gesch. d. spätrom. Reiches*, I, 1928, p. 133, no. 4, and E. Groag, P-W art. '*Maxentius*' (Regierung), col. 2246—but only because they have been misled by the Tarraco error. In 309, 310, as we saw above, *solidi* of quite a different kind were being issued.

<sup>3</sup> I cannot discuss here the series of '*biniones*,' struck after the appointment of the Caesars with reverses, SOLI INVICTO COMITI (Gnecchi, *I Medaglioni Rom.* I, pl. 9. 5: *Hirsch Sale Catalogue*, xxix, 1910, no. 1388) and IOVI CONSERVATORI (Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, pl. 6, 7). See Maurice, *op. cit.* II, p. 260 ff.

<sup>4</sup> With regard to the list that follows I should note that I cannot trace the coins described by Maurice, II, p. 244, no. xviii, p. 245, no. xxii, p. 253, no. viii. Maurice II, p. 219, no. viii, is not in the British Museum. Finally, I should express my sincerest thanks to my friend, H. Mattingly, for help in various ways. I am very much indebted, too, for the plaster-casts to the curators of the great Cabinets of Coins.

LIST OF *SOLIDI* STRUCK AT TICINUM A.D. 315-317.

## I. CONSTANTINVS.

Obverse legend, unless otherwise stated : CONSTANTINVS P · F · AVG ·.

(A). denotes Head, laureate, r. on the obverse.

NO.	MINT-MARK	REVERSE	OVERSE	REFERENCE TO MAURICE, <i>Num. Const.</i> VOL. II	DATE IN MAURICE	PROVENANCE
1 pl. ii, 21.	S.M.T	ADLOCVTIO AVG · Emperor standing l. on four - footed base, raising r. hand : two soldiers and one captive, both l. and r. in background, three standards, both l. and r.	Bust in helmet ornamented with jewels, r.	—	—	Trau Coll. (Vienna)
2	S.M.T.	CONCORDIA AVGG · N.N. Concordia seated l., holding sceptre and cornucopiae.	(A.)	P. 244 no. xix	A.D. 309-313	Vienna
3 pl. ii, 20.	.T.	FELICIA TEMPORA. Four children with symbols of the Seasons.	Bust front, with nimbus, draped.	P. 252 no. vi.	A.D. 313-317	Trau Coll. (Vienna)
4 pl. ii, 22.	.T.	" "	(A.)	P. 253 no. v, 2	"	Paris
4 <sup>a</sup>	"	" "	"	"	"	Naples
5 pl. iii, 3.	SMT	FELIX PROCESSVS COS · IIII AVG · N. Emperor, togate, standing l., holding globe and sceptre.	"	P. 253 no. vi.	A.D. 315	Berlin
5 <sup>a</sup> pl. iii, 13.	"	" "	"	"	"	Rome (National Museum —Gnecchi)
5 <sup>b</sup>	"	" "	"	"	"	Evans Sale, 1922, lot 185
6 pl. iii, 10.	SM[T]	FIDES EXERCITVS. Fides seated l., between two standards.	"	—	—	Vienna
7 pl. iii, 12.	SMT	FORTVNAE REDVCI. Fortuna seated l., holding rudder and cornucopiae.	"	P. 236 no. xii	A.D. 309-313	London

NO.	MINT-MARK	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REFERENCE TO MAURICE, <i>Num. Const.</i> VOL. II	DATE IN MAURICE	PROVENANCE
8 pl. ii, 18.	[PT]	GAVDIVM ROMANOR- VM. FRANC. ET ALAM. Trophy, under which are two mourning captives.	Bust three - fourths front, in gala dress, Victory on globe in r. hand, sceptre in l.	—	—	Gotha
9 pl. iii, 15.	SMT	GAVDIVM ROMANOR- VM. AS ABOVE, but FRAN · ET ALAM ·	(A.)	P. 235 no. xi	A.D. 309-313	London
10 pl. iii, 16.	SMT	GAVDIVM ROMAN- ORVM. Soldier drag- ging captive to Em- peror standing l.	„	—	—	Budapest
11 pl. ii, 16.	SMT	LIBERALITAS XI IMP · IIII COS. P.P.P. Liber- alitas standing l., holding account - board and cornuco- piae.	COMIS CON - STANTINI AVG. Bust, laureate, draped l., r. hand raising globe in l. Be- hind, profile of Sol.	P. 236 no. xiii (Cp. Laffran- chi. op. cit.)	A.D. 309-313	London
12 pl. iii, 20.	SMT	PAX AETERNA AVG · N. Emperor, in gala- dress (as pl. iii, 14, 22), standing l. facing city-goddess (cp. pl. ii, 19), holding Vic- tory, and receiving wreath from a second female figure.	(A.)	—	—	Vienna
13 pl. iv, 1.	SMT	PRINCIPI IVVENTVTIS. Prince standing r., holding globe and spear.	(A.)	P. 245 no. xxiii, and p. 261, n o. viii, 2.	A.D. 309-313 and A.D. 317-320	Paris
13a pl. iv, 3.	„	„ „	„	„	„	Vienna
14 pl. ii, 17.	PT	P · M · TRIB · P · COS · IIII P.P. PROCOS · Emperor seated l., holding globe and short sceptre.	As on no. 8 pl. ii, 18.	P. 251 no. iv, 1	A.D. 315	Trau Coll. (Vienna)
15 pl. iii. 1	SMT	„ „	(A.)	P. 252 no. iv.	„	Vienna
15a pl. iii. 7.	„	„ „	„	„	„	Gotha
15b	„	„ „	„	„	„	Vautier Sale, 1922, lot 1744

NO.	MINT-MARK	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REFERENCE TO MAURICE, <i>Num. Const.</i> VOL. II	DATE IN MAURICE	PROVENANCE
16 pl. iii, 5.	SMT	RECTOR TOTIVS ORBIS. Emperor, in military dress, seated on heap of arms, holding parazonium in l. hand and resting r. on zodiac: behind, Victory crowning him.	(A.)	P. 278 no. ix	A.D. 324-326	London
17 pl. ii, 15.	SMT	RESTITVTORI LIBERTATIS. Emperor, in military dress, standing l., receiving globe from Roma seated r., holding sceptre.	Busts of Emperor and Sol as on No. 11 = pl. ii, 16.	Kenner, <i>Num. Zeit.</i> (34), 1902, p. 55, no. 9	—	Weifert Coll. (Belgrade)
18 pl. iii, 4.	PT	RESTITVTOR LIBERTATIS. Emperor, in military dress, seated on heap of arms, holding long sceptre in l. hand and resting r. on zodiac.	(A.)	Kenner <i>ibid.</i> , p. 56, no. 10	—	Weifert Coll. (Belgrade)
19 pl. iii, 18.	SMT	” ”	”	—	—	Vienna
20 pl. ii, 23.	S.M.T.	SECVRITAS PERPETVA. Emperor, in military dress, standing l., holding long sceptre in l. hand, and resting r. hand on trophy.	”	Hirsch Sale xxix, 1910, lot 1385	—	Berlin
21 pl. iii, 14.	SMT	SOLI COMITI AVG. N. Emperor, in gala dress, standing l., receiving Victory on globe from Sol: between them, captive, kneeling, holding up hands in appeal to Emperor.	”	P. 250 f., iii	A.D. 313-317	Vienna
21a pl. iii, 22.	”	” ”	”	”	”	Paris
22 pl. iii, 21.	SMT	SOLI COMITI CONSTANTINI AVG. As on No. 21, but Emperor is in military dress.	”	P. 243 no. xvi	A.D. 309-313	Gotha
23 pl. iii, 9.	SMT	VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG. Victory advancing l., holding wreath and palm: a captive l. and r.	”	P. 273 no. vii	A.D. 320-324	Vienna

NO.	MINT-MARK	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REFERENCE TO MAURICE, <i>Num. Const.</i> VOL. II	DATE IN MAURICE	PROVENANCE
23a pl. iii, 17.	SMT	VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG. Victory advancing l., holding wreath and palm : a captive l. and r.	(A.)	P. 273 no. vii	A.D. 320-324	Copenhagen
24 pl. iii, 19.	SMT	VICTORIAE PERPETVAE. Victory seated r. on heap of arms inscribing VOT · XX on shield set on her knee, which is supported by a Cupid.	„	P. 262 no. xi	A.D. 317-320	Vienna
24a pl. iv, 2.	„	„ „	„	„	„	„
25 pl. ii, 14.	S.M.T.	VICTORE AVG · N · VOTIS X. Victory seated r. on heap of arms, inscribing MVL. XX on shield: in front, trophy, under which two captives sit.	„		—	Stockholm
26	SMT	„ „	Bust of Constantine l., seen from back, with shield, spear and laureate helmet; on the shield, Emperor riding down enemy r. behind him, Victory.	<i>Vierordt Sale</i> , Amsterdam, 1923, lot 2653, pl. 69	—	Vierordt Sale
27 pl. iii, 2.	SMT	VICTOR OMNIVM GENTIVM. Emperor, in military dress, standing l., holding globe and long sceptre, crowned by Victory standing behind him.	(A.)	P. 277 f. no. viii.	A.D. 324-326	London
28 pl. iii, 11.	SMT	VICTOR OMNIVM GENTIVM. Emperor in military dress, standing l. holding standard and shield, to l. two suppliant barbarians kneeling, to r. a seated captive.	„	—	—	London
29 pl. ii, 19.	SMT	VICTORIOSO SEMPER. Emperoringalad dress, standing front, receiving wreath from a city-goddess and crowned by Victory.	Bust, draped, cuirassed, r. hand raised, globe in l. : nimbus round head.	P. 279 no. x	A.D. 324-326	Trivulzio Coll. (Milan)

NO.	MINT-MARK	REVERSE	OBVERSE	REFERENCE TO MAURICE, <i>Num. Const.</i> VOL. II	DATE IN MAURICE	PROVENANCE
29a	SMT	VICTORIOSO SEMPER. Emperor in gala-dress, standing front, receiving wreath from a city-goddess and crowned by Victory.	Bust, draped, cuirassed, r. hand raised, globe in l.; nimbus round head.	P. 279 no. x	A.D. 324-326	Elmer Coll. (Pančevo)
30 pl. iii, 6.	SMT	VIRTUS AVGVSTI N°. Emperor riding down three enemies r., r. hand raised, shield in l.	(A.)	—	—	Laffranchi Coll. (Milan)
31 pl. iii, 8.	SMT	VIRTUS AVGVSTI N°. Mars advancing r., holding spear and trophy over shoulder: a captive r. and l.	,,	P. 243 f. no. xvii	A.D. 309-313	London

## 2. LICINIVS 1 A.D. 317

32 pl. iv, 6.	SMT	CONCORDIA AVGG · N · N°. Concordia seated l., holding caduceus and cornucopiae.	IMP LICINIVS P · F · AVG P · F · AVG (A.)	—	—	Milan
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## 3. CRISPVS A.D. 317

33 pl. iv, 5.	SMT	CONCORDIA AVGG · NN ·. As on No. 32.	FL · IVL · CRISPVS NOB · CAES. Head, laureate r., bust seen from back, bare with spear and shield	—	—	Vienna
34 pl. iv, 4.	SMT	PRINCIPI IVVENTVTIS. Prince, in military dress, standing r., holding globe and spear.	,,	P. 261 no. viii, 1.	A.D. 317-320	Vienna









SOLIDI STRUCK AT TICINUM, A.D. 315-317 AND CONSTANTINE'S MONOGRAM-HELMET TYPES.  
(See p. 9, ff.)