Who Built the Arch of Constantine? Its History from Domitian to Constantine

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WHO BUILT THE ARCH OF CONSTANTINE? ITS HISTORY FROM DOMITIAN TO CONSTANTINE

HARDLY anything might seem more audacious than to deny that the arch of Constantine was built in honor of that emperor; yet the really amazing thing is our failure to attend to the numerous hints that this arch had existed long before Constantine. Artists and archaeologists have always been unable to explain how an architect of the decadent age of Constantine could have given to this arch its marvellous proportions and silhouette, which set it above all other arches, even those of the golden age (Fig. 1). Historians have been puzzled by the silence of that early catalogue of the buildings at Rome, the *Notitia*, issued before Constantine's death (334 A.D.), which assigns to Constantine, apparently, only the Janus in the Forum Boarium. The same *Notitia* increases the mystery by speaking of an *Arcus Novus* on the Via Lata, which can only be the arch of Diocletian, dedicated in 303. If in 334 the arch of 303 was still the latest of triumphal arches, how could an arch have been built to Constantine in 315? Besides, a student of Roman law would argue that it was against the unbroken tenets of tradition and law to erect such an arch to an emperor who had not actually been decreed a triumph and whose victories had been not over a foreign but over a domestic foe. According to ancient literature and law, therefore, there was not and could not have been a triumphal arch of Constantine, in the sense that it was built expressly for Constantine. It is quite different if the arch could be recognized as an already existing arch rededicated in his honor.

It is my expectation to prove in this paper that the arch was built long before Constantine; also to show that its construc-

tion should probably be ascribed to the Emperor Domitian, shortly before or after 90 A.D., some 225 years before the dedication to Constantine. After the assassination of Domitian, his *memoriae damnatio* by the senate condemned to mutilation, and sometimes to destruction, all his public monuments, and especially his memorial and triumphal arches, which were closest to him, personally. The dedicatory inscriptions, the statues and reliefs in his honor, were destroyed. His works

FIGURE 1. — THE ARCH OF CONSTANTINE, SEEN FROM THE NORTH.

where spared became ownerless and could be rededicated by or to any emperor, as was the case, for instance, with the Forum of Nerva. But, throughout the second century, this arch, so strongly associated with the odious memory of a tyrant, remained unchanged and unclaimed, for during this prosperous age of the Antonines the senate continued to build special arches for each triumphing emperor. It was only during the third century, when Rome, impoverished and suffering from the frequent absence of the emperors, with an art in constant

decay, and with building operations almost suspended for a half century, resorted to makeshifts in the way of triumphal monuments. Between 203 when the senate built the arch to Septimius Severus and 303 when one was consecrated to Diocletian, we know of the erection of but a single triumphal arch, that of Gordian III, *ca.* 240. What was done by the senate during these hundred years to commemorate imperial victories? I expect to show that the senate utilized for this purpose the ex-Domitianic arch, turning this wound-scarred war-horse into a marvellous historic bulletin board, a triumphal mosaic and palimpsest, which became the quintessence of Roman history during the third century. Then, between 312 and 315, after it had thus long been purged of its original evil association and, as its inscription boasts, become "famous for its many triumphs," its evolution closed, and it was once more dedicated to a single emperor, to Constantine, after a unique and varied career, to be honored throughout the ages as a monument to the first Christian emperor.

It has been universally believed,[1] on the apparently unimpeachable authority of the dedicatory inscription on the arch, and on that authority alone, that when the Romans, grateful to Constantine for reëstablishing peace after his victory over Maxentius, just outside Rome, in 312, decided to commemorate the event by a triumphal arch, the architect gathered from several earlier monuments a number of bas-reliefs, statues, and architectural members, especially the main cornice, columns, and pilasters, and built all this material into the fabric of the arch as he erected it. To these spoils he is supposed to have added whatever was needed to complete the design, by the handiwork of contemporary artists, in the decadent style of the Constantinian age. Until quite recently it was supposed that the earlier sculptures that were so used were all of the time of Trajan and taken from one of his arches — either that on the Via Appia or that in the Forum of Trajan — or from some other part of his forum. But this theory, due to the current ignorance of the historic phases of Roman sculpture, was

[1] The Bibliography of the arch is too voluminous to be given here, and it would be superfluous. Good lists are given by Mlle. Bieber, by Sieveking, by Arndt, and by other authors of the studies quoted in the following notes.

shattered in 1889 and 1890 by Petersen,[1] who showed that the eight large reliefs of the attic belonged originally to a triumphal arch of Marcus Aurelius, and who also proposed a new interpretation of the eight medallions. It was suggested that the main cornice with its pilasters and columns, which were too beautiful to be Constantinian, were taken from the same arch of Marcus Aurelius, together with the statues of barbarians on the attic. Some years later,[2] a new impetus came from a detailed study of the eight medallions in the central zone, which led Arndt to attribute these exquisite works not to the Trajanic age, but to the neo-Hellenic art of Hadrian. An English critic[3] then put forward the suggestion that they were of the earlier Flavian age, were in fact Domitianic, taken from the *Domus gentis Flaviae*. Almost at once, a German archaeologist, Sieveking,[4] while accepting the Flavian date for four of the medallions, saw in the other four the art of Hadrian. Then, quite recently, the publication on a large scale, from casts,[5] of the heads in the medallions has led to an interesting discussion in which a number of critics have taken part, and in the course of which Sieveking[6] withdrew his dual suggestion and joined those who believe in the Hadrianic theory. It has been supposed that in these medallions, as elsewhere, the original head of the emperor was changed into a portrait of

[1] 'I rilievi tondi dell'Arco di Costantino,' in *Röm. Mitt.* 1889, p. 314; and 'Die Attikareliefs am Constantinsbogen,' *ibid.* 1890, p. 73. Cf. article by Monaci in *B. Com. Rom.* 1900, p. 25 ff. Later study by Petersen in *Neue Jahrb. f. Klass. Alt.* 1906, p. 522 ff.

[2] Arndt, in *Denk. griech. u. röm. Skulptur*, text to pls. 555, 559, 560, 565.

[3] Stuart Jones, 'Notes on Roman Historical Sculptures' in *B.S.R.* III, p. 213, published in 1905.

[4] 'Die Medaillons am Konstantinsbogen,' *Röm. Mitt.* XXII, 1906, p. 345 ff.

[5] By Salomon Reinach in *Revue Archéologique*, XVII, 1911, pls. I–XVII, with interesting symposium of opinions by S. de Ricci, Studniczka, and others. Cf. *Revue Arch.* XVII, 1911, p. 465.

[6] *Berl. Phil. W.* 1911, No. 39. The article which caused his reversal of opinion was one on the medallions by Mlle. Bieber (*Röm. Mitt.* 1911, p. 274), which illustrates the danger of basing a study as delicate, as aesthetic, and as detailed as that of Sieveking on an examination of mere photographs instead of the monument itself. It was a result which I predicted to Dr. Hülsen when he received Dr. Sieveking's article for publication. Such facile criticism without investigation of the originals ought to be discouraged, as it tends to confuse and lower archaeological standards.

Constantine when they were used on the arch; but as certain imperial heads were worked over to represent not Constantine, but some emperor or emperors of about the middle of the third century or later, critics suggested the names of Claudius Gothicus, Philip, Carus, Carinus, and even of Constantine's father, Constantius Chlorus. It therefore became necessary to suppose either that Constantine's artists had done this, which was hardly tenable, or that a few of the medallions had been used by one or more emperors of the third century in some earlier arch from which they would have been once again removed to the arch of Constantine, thus reuniting them once more with the rest of the medallions. This hypothesis also shows into what straits the Constantinian theory was forcing the best critics.

During this time no serious objection was raised to the attribution to Trajan and his Dacian victories of the four great battle scenes from a colossal frieze, now set into the passage-way and the ends of the attic.

As for the sculptures of late date and poor style, they had all been ascribed to Constantine's artists: the Victories, the River Gods and Seasons of the spandrels; the keystones; the frieze; the sculptured pedestals of the columns. Quite recently, however, a dissenting voice was raised in regard to the frieze, the greater portion of which, including the triumphal procession, is ascribed by Mr. Wace to an arch or some other monument of Diocletian, a theory which would involve the wanton destruction of this monument only ten or fifteen years after its constructon.[1]

This summary of the present attitude of critics toward the arch shows that the question has been attacked merely from the side of the aesthetic qualities of the sculptures, if we except a few valuable observations by Petersen on the main cornice and its columns and pilasters. In my own examination, the question will be studied from different points of view, and particular stress will be laid on the structural and technical problems presented both by the sculptures and by the architectural details. The solution which this study suggests will be

[1] Wace in *B.S.R.* III, p. 270 ff. Cf. Monaci in *B. Com. Rom.* 1900, p. 75 ff. and *Atti Pont. Acad. di Arch.* 1901, p. 107 ff. and 1904, p. 3 ff.

tested by the historical, literary, and traditional evidence: only such aesthetic questions will be raised as bear upon the problems of chronology.

In order to clear the horizon, the dedicatory inscription must first be examined. It would seem to state in precise terms that the arch was built for Constantine, and to make it futile even to discuss the question, unless we admit that this was one of the not unknown cases in which a restorer claimed to be the builder. But it is not necessary to have recourse to any such hypothesis. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is out of the mouth of the inscription itself that I can prove that the arch existed long before Constantine. It reads (*C.I.L.* VI, 1139):

IMP. CAES. FL. CONSTANTINO MAXIMO
P. F. AVGVSTO S. P. Q. R.
QVOD INSTINCTV DIVINITATIS MENTIS
MAGNITVDINE CVM EXERCITV SVO
TAM DE TYRANNO QVAM DE OMNI EIVS
FACTIONE VNO TEMPORE IVSTIS
REMPVBLICAM VLTVS EST ARMIS
ARCVM TRIVMPHIS INSIGNEM DICAVIT

Now, if we compare this inscription with others on triumphal arches, of which I give typical instances in a footnote,[1] two

[1] The simplest form of arch dedication is that on the arch of Titus: *Senatus Populusque Romanus divo Tito divi Vespasiani f. Vespasiano Augusto.* A contemporary example of the fuller form corresponding roughly to the formula on the arch of Constantine is that on the destroyed arch of Titus in the Circus Maximus: *Senatus Populusq. Romanus imp. Tito Caesari divi Vespasiani f. Vespasiano Augusto pontif. max. trib. pot. X, imp. XVII, cos. VIII, p.p., principi suo, quod praeceptis patris consiliisq. et auspiciis gentem Iudaeorum domuit et urbem Hierusolymam, omnibus ante se ducibus regibus gentibus aut frustra petitam aut omnino intemptatam, delevit.* Both types appear, in the next generation, on the arches of Trajan. The simpler formula, slightly expanded, is at Beneventum: *Imp. Caesari divi Nervae filio Nervae Traiano optimo Aug. Germanico Dacico pontif. max. trib. potest. XVII, imp. VII cos. VI p.p. fortissimo principi, Senatus P. Q. R.* The fuller form appears at Ancona, in which, after the imperial titles, we read: *providentissimo principi Senatus P. Q. R. quod accessum Italiae, hoc etiam addito ex pecunia sua portu, tutiorem navigantibus reddiderit.* In the previous period, we find the longer formula represented on the arch of Claudius in Rome recording the conquest of Britain: *Ti. Clau[dio*

differences will be particularly noticeable: that there are no chronological or triumphal titles given to Constantine, as is customary especially after the second century, and that the last line, in which the arch is mentioned, is an addition to the normal formula, which is unique in Rome and, in fact, in all Italy. In all other cases the inscription is a mere dedication, without particularizing what is dedicated. Normally the inscription would have ended with the word *armis*. There must be some reason for this break with traditional usage, a break which places this arch in a category of its own, and this reason must be sought for in the wording of this additional line. What is the exact meaning of *arcum triumphis insignem?* The unprejudiced Latinist would unhesitatingly translate it "this arch famous for its triumphs." Why has it not been so understood? Because such a translation would not square with the supposition that the arch was built for Constantine, since Constantine had not had even a single triumph, much less several triumphs. His triumphal entrance into Rome after the victory over Maxentius was merely a popular ovation, not a triumph, which is a matter formally voted on and decreed for certain specific deeds, including the enlargement of Roman

Drusi f.] . . . *Senatus Po*[*pulusque*] *Ro*[*manus q*]*uod reges Britanniai XI devictos sine ulla iactura in deditionem acceperit gentesque barbaras trans oceanum primus in dicionem populi Romani redigerit.* Among the simpler and shorter formulas of the Augustan age, the arch at Rimini represents the fuller form (*C.I.L.* XI, 365), showing that the arch commemorated the building and repairing of Italian highways and ending: *celeberrimeis Italiae vieis consilio* [*et sumptib*]*us suis muniteis.* The style thus inaugurated by Augustus in his early years, and which, as we have seen, was continued until the close of Trajan's reign, was not discontinued under the later Antonines, for it appears on the arch of Septimius Severus in the Forum: *Imp. Caes. Lucio Septimio . . . et Imp. Caes. M. Aurelio L. fil. Antonino . . . ob rem publicam restitutam imperiumque populi Romani propagatum insignibus virtutibus eorum domi forisque, S. P. Q. R.*

In all these cases the monument bearing the dedicatory inscription is left unmentioned.

It is a fact that has some bearing on the present case that the arch of Augustus at Fano was restored under Constantine and *rededicated to him* a few weeks after his death, between May 22 and September 9, 337: *Divo Augusto Pio Constantino patri dominorum curante L. Turcio Secundo*, etc. The original dedicatory inscription of Augustus was left when the new dedication was added. This constitutes the main difference between the arch at Fano and the arch in Rome, whence the original inscription had disappeared about two hundred and fifteen years before the Constantinian dedication was added.

territory and the conquest of foreign foes, none of which Constantine could claim. Yet, when the arch was dedicated to him, it was famous, noted, for its connection with *several triumphs*. Not even by the greatest stretch of the imagination, or by granting a breach of immutable Roman law and custom, can one regard this expression as referring to Constantine. On the other hand, it is easy to see how the senate, by taking an arch already built, already used as a triumphal arch, and rededicating it to Constantine, could by this subterfuge honor the emperor without breaking the law.[1]

The second peculiarity to which I referred is the absence in the inscription of any chronological and triumphal titles such as are ordinarily given to emperors on their triumphal arches under the middle and later empire. This is the more inexplicable because in the latter part of 315, when the arch is supposed to have been dedicated, Constantine had already been given in inscriptions of 314 and 315 such triumphal titles as Germanicus Maximus, Gothicus Maximus, Sarmaticus, Britannicus, Persicus, Adiabenicus.[2] In the absence of chronological data in the dedication itself, the only reason there has been for the selection of 315 as the date of the arch has been the supplementary inscriptions in large letters lower down. On the northern face are: VOTIS · X on the left pylon and VOTIS XX on the right pylon ; and SIC X SIC XX in the corresponding positions on the southern face. It has been supposed that these two expressions were undoubtedly connected with the *decennalia* of the emperor, which took place on July 25, 315, and that they expressed the hope that his twentieth would be as auspicious as his tenth anniversary. It seems curious that no scholar should have tested the accuracy of such a conclusion, but that all have

[1] See the condemnation of Constantine by Ammianus Marcellinus (XVI, 10) for breaking this Roman tradition by erecting arches in Gaul to celebrate victories in wars that were civil or within Roman territory. The proper theory is referred to in Pliny's Panegyric of Trajan, where Domitian's construction of arches without corresponding additions to Roman territory is condemned.

[2] See Ferrero, in *Atti Acad. Sc. di Torino*, XXXII, p. 837 ff. Cf. *C.I.L.* VIII, 10064 ; XI, 9 ; also Pauly-Wissowa *s.v.* Constantinus. It is still asserted that Constantine did not receive the title *Maximus*, which is given to him on the arch, until 315, but Cagnat himself (p. 483) acknowledges that Babelon has proved (*Mélanges Boissier*, p. 53) that he had it as early as October 312.

followed one another unquestioningly. The slightest inquiry[1] would have disclosed the fact that neither in the case of the VOTIS or in that of the SIC was such a rule actually followed by Roman custom. In the case of Probus (276–282), though he reigned for only about *six* years, we find on his coins the expression VOTIS X et XX FEL. Constantius Chlorus, who was Augustus for only about a year, has on his coins VOT. XX SIC XXX. Gratian (361–389), at the most liberal allowance, can be given only 28 years, yet his coins have VOT. XXX MVLT. XXXX. Of emperors whose coins have VOT. XX MVLT. XXX Constans reigned only five years, Valentinian II about eleven, and Valens about fifteen years. The expression SIC X SIC XX is used of several whose reign was much under ten years — Galerius, Maximinus, etc. Numerous examples can be gathered from Cohen, Eckhel, *et al.* The conclusion is that the expressions SIC X or VOT. X were used or could be used of an emperor during any year of his reign from the second to the tenth.

There is, then, no ground whatever, on the basis of these expressions, for dating the dedication of the arch of Constantine in 315. It could have happened just as well in 314 or 313; or at any time, in fact, after Constantine's victory over Maxentius in October 312. This brings us back to the question of the absence of any triumphal titles in the dedication. If in 314 and 315 Constantine had assumed the titles I have enumerated above, and if they are not given in the dedication, the logical inference would be that the date of the dedicatory inscription antedates 314. I would, therefore, suggest the year 313. As will appear later, the work actually done on the arch by Constantine's artists was not so extensive as to make it necessary to allow more than a few months for its execution.

We may conclude then, merely from the dedication, that the arch, already associated with several triumphs before the time of Constantine, was dedicated to him in 313.

Now, an arch, in order to be associated with several successive emperors, would have to be built originally by or dedicated to an emperor who suffered after death the *memoriae damnatio*,

[1] An examination of the index of Cohen-Babelon would be sufficient to establish the baselessness of this imaginary chronological certainty.

which entailed the casting down of his statues and the erasure or destruction of the inscriptions in his honor. In the case of such a triumphal arch, the elimination of the dedicatory inscription would be supplemented by the destruction of bronze quadriga, imperial statue, trophies, triumphal frieze, and any other decorative features that connected the structure very clearly with the person and career of the emperor. It would then be a mutilated civic monument unclaimed and undedicated, which could be adapted to temporary or miscellaneous purposes, and could at any time be rededicated. To which of the emperors with both a triumphal record and the stigma of a *memoriae damnatio* can the construction of the arch of Constantine be ascribed?

This question, which it would seem almost hopeless to ask, is answered with unexpected clearness by the famous topographical

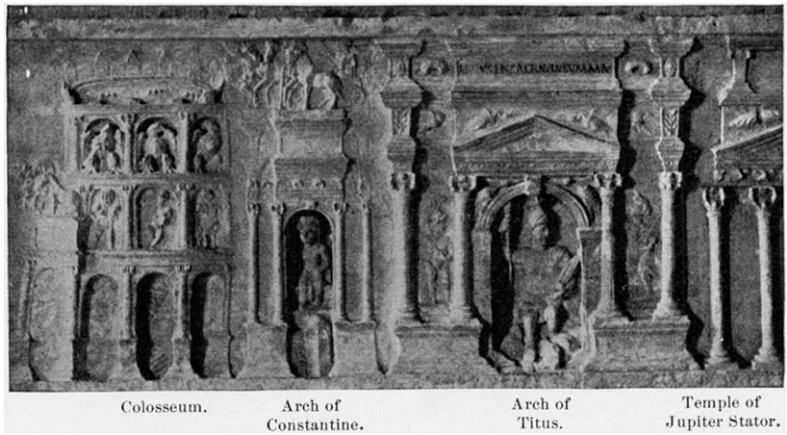

FIGURE 2. — PART OF THE HATERII RELIEF, SHOWING THE "ARCH OF CONSTANTINE" AS IT WAS IN THE TIME OF DOMITIAN.

relief from the tomb of the Haterii (Fig. 2), known to all Roman scholars as a corner-stone of Forum topography, which reproduces the principal buildings along the early part of the processional route from the funeral ceremony in the Forum to the mausoleum on the Via Labicana. The first building is the temple of Jupiter Stator at the head of the Via Sacra; the second is the arch of Titus; the third is *an arch hitherto unidentified;* the fourth is the Colosseum. The artist indicates, as

clearly as possible, that the arch of Titus is in the foreground, and that the unknown arch, by its smaller size and lower relief, is in the distance, close to the Colosseum. It is given in profile and its façade has free-standing columns. There is a sculptured frieze encircling the entire arch under the main cornice, and the attic is crowned by an imperial triumphal quadriga. An imaginary niche or arcade is cut in the end of the arch for a statue of the Mater Magna, an indication that her temple was in this section of the Palatine. Every one of these characteristics suits the arch of Constantine. This unidentified arch stands about where it does, faces in about the way it does, and has the same design, in so far as it can be seen from the end. (Compare Figs. 2 and 3.) One of the unrecognized facts about the arch of Constantine is that it probably had a sculptured frieze under its main cornice which was torn away. If the arch on the Haterii relief is not the arch of Constantine, what is it? Not a trace of any arch has been found in the excavation of this immediate neighborhood, nor is there any possibility that it could have stood anywhere except about where the arch of Constantine now stands. A photograph taken with the arch of Titus in the foreground to the right, with the Colosseum in the middle background, would include between them the arch of Constantine seen almost in profile.

What is the date of the arch on the Haterii relief? The relief has been generally conceded to be Flavian, or, more specifically, Domitianic.[1] As the arch of Titus is reproduced, which was finished by Domitian, it can hardly be earlier. As the relief represents the funeral ceremony and the opening of the new family mausoleum, and as busts found in the mausoleum are generally conceded to be of distinctly Flavian art, it cannot be later than Domitian. Consequently, the unidentified arch must belong to the reign of Domitian. The use of free-standing columns at this early date may be objected to. It has been supposed that only engaged columns were used in

[1] Helbig, *Führer*, Nos. 670–675; Crowfoot in *J.H.S.* 1900; Benndorf-Schoene, 343–345; Wace, 'Frag. of Rom. Hist. Rel.' in *B.S.R.* III, 3. Judgment has been based mainly on the technique of the busts found in the mausoleum, but that of the reliefs is also convincingly Domitianic. It is my opinion that the group of four divinities is somewhat later, possibly Hadrianic or Antonine.

FIGURE 3. — EAST END OF THE ARCH OF CONSTANTINE.
(With inserted medallion and frieze cut long after construction.)

the design of arch façades until the time of Hadrian. I have, however, myself called attention to their use in the early part of Trajan's reign. So far as we can judge they had not been introduced in any arches under Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, or Nero. The arch of Titus, begun before Domitian's accession, did not have them. But in this arch on the Haterii relief they appear, and the inference would be that it is to one of the consummate artists who worked for Domitian that the innovation was due that was slowly to revolutionize arch design. More than this, I may say that several years before I had identified the arch of Constantine as an arch of Domitian I had concluded from a study of the coinage of Domitian that free-standing columns were used in his triumphal arches. As he made himself notorious for the number and magnificence of his triumphal arches, more than any emperor either before or since, it would have been natural for his architect to innovate in their design. The equation, then, can be stated as follows: arch of Constantine = unknown Haterii arch = an arch of Domitian.

The evidence of the inscription and of the Haterii relief, which might seem to be conclusive in themselves, had, however, nothing to do either with my first doubts or with my gradually acquired certitude as to the pre-Constantinian date of this arch. This certitude I gained absolutely from the study of the construction, and it was based entirely on technical grounds which showed me how impossible the Constantinian date was. Only after this conviction had been gained and its details were being carefully worked at and sifted did I see how both the inscription and the relief fitted in with my revolutionary idea and gave to my structural argument the seal of historical corroboration. If the objections to the Constantinian date which I enumerate on p. 368 are now reread, it will be evident that they can all be explained by my proposed Domitianic date.

As a preliminary to the technical study it will be necessary to describe how a triumphal arch was built. The materials varied at different times and in different regions, but one rule always holds good, because it was the orthodox traditional method handed down from Greece to Rome: that all the decorative work was done on the monument itself *after* con-

struction. We are accustomed in modern times to the habit of cutting the ornamentation — both figured and decorative — *before* setting it in place. So it must be reiterated and emphasized that friezes, medallions, rectangular reliefs, keystones, coffered ceiling, cornices, spandrel groups, were all planned, and the blocks or slabs on which they were to be carved were built up with the structure and left rough, with just the proper projection from the mass, and were not touched until the construction was completed. Then the decorative work was begun, at the top: first the carving and then, at times, the coloring. This preliminary will make it easy to explain the real relation of the sculptures on the arch of Constantine to its structure, and to show how untenable is the current hypothesis.

First, however, a few more words as to the structure itself. The official or central Roman school — as distinguished, let us say, from the Campanian school, or from provincial schools like those in Northern Africa and Syria — began by building triumphal and memorial arches of solid blocks of travertine and tufa and then of travertine alone. This was in the pre-Augustan and Augustan age.[1] Before the death of Augustus, the spread of the use of decorative sculpture on arches made artists adopt a facing of marble slabs and blocks covering the travertine, that should allow of the desirable beauty of detail impossible in the coarser stone. Beginning with a thin veneer the marble facing became gradually heavier. In the time of Constantine and for some time previously the core behind the facing had ceased to be travertine and had become rubble, concrete, and brick. This is exemplified in the Janus arches of the Forum Boarium and at Saxa Rubra, near Rome. In the arch of Constantine we find the earlier technique of the travertine core, and among existing monuments a close analogy is to the arch of Trajan at Beneventum. This in itself argues a pre-Constantinian date for the structure. In the parts where brickwork is added we find Constantinian work on our arch.

[1] Pre-Augustan examples are at Spoleto, Aquino, Trieste, Aix-les-Bains, Carpentras, etc. Augustan examples are at Aosta, Verona, Rimini. Note the thin veneer at Aosta (Porta Praetoria), which is paralleled at Spello in the pre-Augustan gates.

It is also necessary to note that Roman builders were extremely particular not to break the course lines of their masonry, especially in the facing blocks or slabs. The sculptural decoration was not allowed to interfere with this regularity. The course lines were made to correspond to the top and base lines of the reliefs. This was easy when, as was nearly always the case, the marble facing that was left plain was built up together with the projecting facing that was to be worked by the sculptors. In the unusual cases, in later Roman times, when already finished decorative units taken from earlier monuments were embodied in the new construction, as is supposed to have been the case in the arch of Constantine, it would not be difficult to follow the same rule. No architectural critic would hesitate to deny that a Roman architect could have preferred in such a case to zig-zag his course lines rather than take the trouble to gauge their height by his material.

But we find that, in order to incorporate the sculptured slabs into the arch of Constantine the architect was obliged in some cases to cut into the course above for the length of the sculptured slab; in other cases to substitute a wider block in that course with an offset in order to have it set down on to the sculpture; in still other cases, to supplement this by the addition of a small cornice strip at the base. The obvious and imperative conclusion is that in such cases the sculptures were inserted in an already existing structure and could not possibly have been built up with it. Again, no competent architect could decide otherwise. We shall examine presently the examples of each of these methods of insertion.

Before proceeding let me recapitulate the main reasons against the Constantinian date.

(1) It does not explain the series of imperial military busts crowned by Victories set into the masonry of the minor archways. The presumption is that they represent emperors, and that they antedate Constantine.

(2) It does not agree with the fact that the majority of the sculptured decorations were inserted into the structure of the arch at some time *after* the construction. Any architect familiar with Roman work can see this.

(3) It does not explain the terrible damage done to the main

cornice while the sculptures of the attic were so little damaged, but such damage could easily have been caused in casting down the groups on the attic and the attic inscription of Domitian.

(4) It does not explain the use, in the recut sculptures, of heads of emperors other than Constantine; a fact explicable only on the supposition that the arch was connected with these emperors.

(5) It does not agree with the fact that the triumphal frieze, which is even earlier than Constantine, is cut in the already existing masonry and was neither provided for in the design nor brought from another monument.

(6) One is unable to explain, with this theory, how the spandrel decoration came to be drafted on a preëxisting structure.

(7) It is, we have seen, contradicted even by the dedicatory inscription.

(8) It is contrary to Roman law and custom.

(9) It is contrary to conclusions based on the *Notitia* and the Haterii relief.

We shall now proceed to the technical analysis, beginning with what is perhaps the simplest problem, that of the end medallions.

The End Medallions (Figs. 4 and 5). In each of the ends there is a medallion, on a level with the eight medallions of the two fronts. They are in a later style and were evidently an imitation of the series of eight. It has been assumed that they are of Constantinian workmanship, though it has been grudgingly granted that their art has pre-Constantinian elements. As a matter of fact it seems like defying the elementary standards of criticism to assert that they belong to the same time and school as the frieze or the spandrels. They seem hardly later than the middle of the third century, and might belong to the time of Severus Alexander. A comparison of these horses with those in the triumphal frieze and the Siege of Verona will illustrate the technical differences. It will be clear, later on, that even this frieze is pre-Constantinian.

If we examine the relation of these end medallions to the masonry, it is evident that they were inserted and were not

part of the original structure or facing. In order to insert the Rising Sun medallion at the east end, which was to be cut in a slab too short to correspond fully to four courses of the facing, the architect first inserted at the bottom of the cut which he made a narrow cornice strip, to serve as a decorative base.

FIGURE 4. — EAST END MEDALLION, "SOL INVICTUS."

This is an evident insertion because it was against Roman custom to carve such mouldings in separate blocks. They were cut either in the top or in the bottom of a wide course, as can be seen without leaving this arch, for instance, in the moulding below the frieze on this same east end. But even with this inserted strip the slab was found not to reach to the level of the fourth course. The architect, therefore, seems to

have removed the facing above it; not only two blocks of the next course but the central epistyle block. He then shortened one of the blocks in order to admit of a new block that should project on both sides of the new medallion. In being put back the shortened block was injured. A new block was cut so as to fit down on to the medallion, and the change in the course line was almost hidden by the thin porphyry framework — now disappeared — which was brought up about to the regular course

FIGURE 5. — WEST END MEDALLION, "DIANA."

level. The jags cut in the block were plainly visible, however, at either end. After this the epistyle block was put back with some slight abrasions. On the right end the upper and lower facing blocks were not cut, but the medallion slab was cut away to fit them and the irregularity was concealed by the porphyry facing of the frame.

In the Moon medallion on the west end, the process was reversed. The two slabs that compose it (each of the other medallions is on a single slab) were longer than was needed, and instead of cutting them down to suit the coursing of the facing slabs, the two slabs of the course above were cut into. The base-moulding also was not separate, as on the east end,

but was cut in the slabs of the medallion. The numerous irregularities seem to show that the insertion was done quite late and led to considerable disturbance of the entire facing. Also, when the surface was cut down to form a square frame filled with some richly colored marble, a queer effect was produced by the narrow rim of the slab left on the right side against the courses.

The conclusion is, on technical grounds, that these medallions were inserted, in the rough block, into the structure of the pre-existing arch and then carved in imitation of the other medallions; on stylistic grounds this happened before the time of Constantine.

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(*To be continued.*)