The Celestial Sign on Constantine's Shields at the Battle of the Mulvian Bridge

by

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Most scholars now accept the reality and sincerity of Constantine's conversion to Christianity during his military campaign against Maxentius for control of Rome in A.D. 312—provided that "conversion" is understood in terms of the superstitious religious environment of the times. [1] The ancient pagan and Christian sources that described the campaign all agreed that the war was waged in an atmosphere of intense religious fervor, even *superstitiosa maleficia* as one source described it, and that each commander appealed to divine power for aid against his enemy. [2] Christian accounts of the campaign reported that Constantine turned to the Christian God at this time, and adopted the use of a Christian talismanic symbol for his soldiers' weapons that successfully invoked the aid and power of this new divine patron for his troops and drove off the hostile demons and pagan deities supporting his enemy's forces. The emperor's victory behind a Christian sign at the climactic Battle of the Mulvian Bridge convinced him that he had found the one and only true God, governor of the cosmos and repository of true power. Thereafter, he worshipped only the Christian Divinity.

Scholars can agree on this general outline of the conversion narrative. Yet a particular issue still contested is the precise form of the talismanic emblem that Constantine employed at the battle.

In order to ascertain the form of this sign, scholars usually turn to Lactantius's pamphlet *On the Deaths of the Persecutors* [*De Mortibus Persecutorum*], which contains the earliest account of the conversion by a contemporary. This Latin Christian rhetor and apologist wrote his account around 315 at Trèves, where he was serving as tutor at the imperial court for Constantine's oldest son, Crispus. [3] He presumably had access to eyewitness testimony about the events surrounding the emperor's conversion. But the conversion story is only a small part of a larger work, the main theme of which is God's *ultion*, revenge, against the evil persecutors of His Church. The conversion narrative is thus rather concise, and even somewhat cryptic. It reads as follows in Latin: [4]

Commonitus est in quiete Constantinus, us *caeleste signum Dei* notaret in scutis atque ita proelium committeret. Facit ut iussus est et *transversa X littera, summo capite circumflexo,* Christum in scutis notat. Quo signo armatus exercitus capit ferrum.

Translated into English, it says:

Constantine was warned in a dream, that he should mark the *celestial sign of God* on his shields and thus commit himself to the battle. He did as he was ordered and *with the letter X traversed, with its highest tip bent round,* he marked Christ on the shields. Armed with this sign the army took the battlefield.

The troublesom phrase is *transversa X lettera, summo capite circumflexo.* It obviously refers to some kind of Christian monogram,[5] but scholars have divided into two schools of thought concerning its graphic form. Emphasizing the adjectival force in *transversa,* rendering it "crossed through," Burckhardt, Alföldi, and Jones traditionally held that the phrase describes a Christ monogram or Christogram—the Greek letter chi (X) with a Greek letter rho (P) slashed vertically through it, thus ☧ or ☧.[6] Emphasizing the verbal element in *transversa,* translating it "turned round," Vogt, Dörries, and MacMullen have recently suggested that the phrase describes a cross monogram or crossogram—the Greek letter chi turned on end to form a Greek cross with its top bent into a Greek letter rho thus, ⳨ or ⳨.[7] The fact that Cicero used *transversa* in the oblique sense of "across, crossed, or thwarted,"[8] may favor the former rendering, since Lactantius was such a devotee and imitator of Ciceronian language that he was nicknamed "the Christian Cicero" by the ancients.

Most of these scholars have relied primarily upon differing translations of the Latin phraseology of Lactantius for their interpretations. These very differences reveal that a solution to this problem cannot come from a literary analysis of Lactantian terminology alone. Other pieces of contemporary evidence must be consulted. Unfortunately, no shields used in the Battle of the Mulvian Bridge are known to be extant. Another literary account by a contemporary, albeit two decades later in time of composition, does exist, as do some pieces of contemporary Christian and imperial art, especially coinage, which are relevant to the issue under investigation.

The literary account is that of the Greek Church Father Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, important participant at the Council of Nicaea, and subsequently a friend and advisor of Constantine during the later part of the emperor's reign in the east. After Constantine's death, he wrote a eulogistic biography in four books on the emperor's religious life and benefactions to the Church, the *Life of Constantine* (*Vita Constantini*), ca. 337-38.[9] Book I is devoted to Constantine's early life and conversion experience. Like Lactantius, Eusebius placed the latter in the campaign against Maxentius for control of Rome.

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Since this was the all-important initial event in the emperor's Christian life, he dealt with it at greater length than his predecessor. Relying on what he affirmed was personal and sworn testimony from Constantine himself, Eusebius offered the following account.[10]

He told how the emperor reflected that he needed more powerful aid than his military forces could afford him, and so decided to seek divine assistance. Constantine recalled that the persecuting emperors who had trusted in many gods, sacrifices, oracles, and the whole paraphernalia of paganism, had been deceived and met unhappy ends. Only his father Constantius, a philosophical monotheist who worshipped a "Supreme Deity" all his life, had found a true protector and giver of good things. Thus, Constantine decided that the God of his father must be the holder of real power. He invoked this *Deus Summus* in prayer, entreating him to reveal his identity and to provide his help in the coming trial. Constantine's answer, Eusebius asserted, came in the form of a marvelous vision and an explanatory dream. While he and his army were pushing toward Rome, they encountered a miraculous sign in the sky: a great cross of light above the sun bearing the inscription "In this, conquer" (τούτῳ νίκα, or *Hoc signo victor eris*).[11]

The import of this apparition was explained to Constantine in a subsequent dream. Christ appeared to the emperor with the image of a celestial sign, and ordered that a copy of it be made for use as an apotropaic device against his enemies. Constantine followed instructions and had workmen fashion a new imperial *vexillum*. This Christian war standard, called the *Labarum*, was composed of a long spear, overlaid with a crossbar carrying a banner with the imperial portrait, and topped with an enwreathed monogram, "the symbol of the Savior's name, two letters indicating the name of Christ through the inscribing of the initial characters, the P crossed through the middle" (τῆς τοιαύτης ἐπηγορίας τὸ σύμβολον, δύο στοιχεῖα τὸ Χριστοῦ διὰ πλοκῆς ὀνόματα . . . χιαζομένου τοῦ ῥῶ κατὰ τὸ μεσαίτατον).[12] Eusebius reported that the emperor was accustomed to wearing this Christogram on his helmet, and in a later section, mentioned that he made his soldiers inscribe it on their shields as well.[13] Confident of invoking divine power through the talismanic emblems on his war implements, Constantine marched to victory over Maxentius.

The purpose here is not to confirm or deny the miraculous elements in the Eusebian account of Constantine's conversion, though in the superstitious religious environment of the era these elements were wholly acceptable to Constantine's contemporaries. Rather, the concern of this study is with the graphic manifestation of Constantine's turn to a new patron deity. If there was a cross vision at all, it simply indicated to Constantine the name of the divinity he should invoke for aid. Although Eusebius described a cruciform standard as one implement of invocation, it is obvious from his account that the constitutive element of the new *vexillum*—the element also found on helmet and shields—was the monogram surmounting it. Much more clearly than Lactantius, he identified it as a Christ monogram, or monogrammatic

combination of the first two letters of the Greek work "Christ," chi and rho (☧). [13] A graphic representation of the emperor's monogrammed standard is available on the imperial coinage of the era, and confirms the Eusebian description [Figure 8]. Thus, if one interprets Lactantius' account of the *caeleste signum* in the light of Eusebian evidence, the Christogram had to have been the original and official form of the new imperial talismanic sign.

An examination of the artistic evidence yields a similar conclusion. Three examples of contemporary Christian art will illustrate this. In Britain, where Constantine was raised to the imperial purple in 306, a large mosaic pavement from a Roman villa of the fourth century has recently been unearthed at the village of Hinton St. Mary in northern Dorset [Figure 1]. Now in the British museum, the polychrome mosaic contains at its center a portrait of the young Christ with a monogram clearly marked above his head–in the chi-rho form. [14]

In Rome, where Constantine fought his final battle against Maxentius, there are numerous pieces of early Christian art. On an early fourth century wall painting in the catacombs of St. Domitilla, there is a striking painting of Sts. Peter and Paul linked together by a Christogram placed above and between them [Figure 3]. [15] Again, on Christian grave stones dating from the late third and early fourth centuries found in the Roman catacombs there are numerous examples of the Christ monogram in either the usual chi-rho or occassional iota-chi form (☧ or ✱). A typical specimen from the cemetary of Callistus reads: PAX D(O)M(INI) ET ✱ CUM FAUSTIN(O) ATTICO. "The peace of the Lord and Christ be with Faustinus Atticus." [Figure 3]. [16]

However much these and other examples may confirm the fact that the standard form of the Christian monogram in use in the western empire in Constantine's time was the Christogram, they still are merely private, or, at best, communal expressions of cultic belief. They relate only indirectly to the issue at hand—the precise form of the official monogram employed by Constantine at the Battle of the Mulvian Bridge. For graphic evidence relevant to this issue, one must turn to the imperial coinage, long a medium of propaganda for the emperors.

Soon after Constantine's conversion in 312, various Christian symbols and motifs began to make their appearance on coins simultaneously with the gradual disappearance of pagan deities and motifs. [17] A word of caution is in order concerning the interpretation of these signs, though. Those signs or motifs that are a part of the basic iconographical design of the coin probably originated in the central court and present Constantine's official policy. Those added to the basic design as marks of issue, decorative embellishments, *et cetera*, probably originated at the regional mint, and simply reflect the Christian predelections of mint administrators and workers who were now free to use Christian as well as non-Christian symbols for control marks and decorations. While certainly significant in revealing the rise of Christians in governmental service, [18] the latter type of signs have less value as evidence for the issue under investigation as they merely reflect, while the former type of signs actually represent, official policy.

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The first specimen of the official type was the beautiful "Safety of the Republic" silver medallion, apparently issued from Ticinum as a luxury donative to important individuals on Constantine's *Decennalia* in 315 [Figure 4].[19] Celebrating the emperor's recent victory over Maxentius, for which the Senate was simultaneously erecting a triumphal arch near the Roman Forum, the obverse side pictured the victorius Constantine in a high crested war helmet with a Christogram badge at the top front of the helm. Numerous scholars also identify the implement over the emperor's shield as a Christian cross scepter with a globe atop it, representing the emperor's new political awareness that he ruled as an agent for Christ on earth.[20] Here certainly is Constantine's personal and public testimony that he had won the Battle of the Mulvian Bridge behind the name of Christ and held power on earth from him.[21]

Once the imperial convert had publicly revealed his new religious position, mint officials and engravers began to use monograms and crosses quite frequently as control marks and decorative embellishments.[22] But as far as the monogram is concerned, with only one late and eastern exception, it always appeared in the Christ monogram or Christogram form.

Possibly inspired by the Ticinese helmet medallions, some bronze coins of the Siscia mint, ca. 318-20, celebrating the "Happy Victory of the Perpetual Prince" showed the emperor in his new war helmet. Among the various decorations on the central bar of the helm were Christograms, probably engraved there by Christian mint workers [Figure 5].[23] More significant were the contemporary bronze coins issued from the four western mints of Ticinum, Aquileia, Siscia, and Thessalonica between 319-20 [Figure 6].[24] The reverse motif celebrated the "Valor of the Army," and showed captives below a war standard. Stylized Christograms with a pin-headed shaft or iota slashed through the chi were employed as issue and series marks in the left field. The appearance of the monogram in several mints probably indicates that the decision to use it came from somewhere high up in the monetary hierarchy of the empire, but whether or not from the court itself is debatable. Yet the monogram in a martial setting was evocative of the story of Constantine's conquest under the name of Christ at the Battle of the Mulvian Bridge.

Some interesting and exceptional bronze pieces within the "Blessed Tranquility" type were minted at Trèves in 322-23. They pictured on the obverse the emperor's son Crispus carrying a shield. The decoration of the shield varies from mint to mint. But at Trèves, some engraver apparently familiar with the Lactantian account of the Mulvian Bridge Battle, or at least cognizant of the current military practice of decorating shields with Christian symbols, marked some of the shields on these coins with a large and clear chi-rho [Figure 7].[25] Since Lactantius had probably written and published the *De Mortibus Persecutorum* at Trèves, these exceptional pieces from the same city would serve to butress the Christogram interpretation over against the crossogram interpretation of his celestial sign description.

The most striking and clearly Christian motif among official issues was minted at Constantine's new Christian city of Constantinople, ca. 326-28. These "Hope of the Commonwealth" bronze coins commemorated the emperor's recent victories in the east over Licinius, the last of the pagan persecutors and imperial rivals for power. The reverse iconography showed Constantine's Christian *Labarum* piercing a wriggling serpent—an apocalyptic motif aimed at the Christian community familiar with pierced serpent imagery [Figure 8]. [26] The standard was dominated by a large and clear Christogram at its apex, and almost perfectly pictured the *Labarum* described in the Eusebian account of Constantine's conversion. Along with the earlier *Decennalia* medallion, this coin represented the official form of the monogram as Constantine used it in the army, and wanted the general public to see it.

A contemporary silver medallion for "Constantine the Augustus" was minted at Rome, ca. 326, depicting the emperor holding a standard with a banner carrying the chi-rho [Figure 9]. [27] Here was the first graphic representation of the simplified *labara* that would become standard in subsequent years—no crossbar or imperial portraits, just a banner with the sacred monogram of Christ. It appeared again in the west during the 330's at Arles or, as it was then known, Constantina. Here bronze coins celebrating the "Glory of the Army" carried a reverse motif of soldiers holding war standards. The chi-rho monogram appeared first in mid-field between two regular military standards in 334 [Figure 10], and then on the banner of a single Christian *labarum* in 336 [Figure 11]. This latter motif depicting the emperor's Christian *vexillum* became a regular representation on coins from all the mints throughout the empire in the late 330's and 340's [Figure 12]. [28]

Against all this evidence supporting the Christogram interpretation of Lactantius's celestial sign, there was only one coin containing a cross monogram during Constantine's reign. It was a "Victory of Constantine the Augustus" gold piece issued only at Antioch in the east, ca. 336-37, and the crossogram appeared in the field as a mark of issue rather than as an official part of the iconographical motif [Figure 13]. [29] This form of the Christian monogram appears to have developed rather late in Constantine's reign, and in the eastern part of the empire. Under the influence of the Eusebian cross vision story it became more popular in subsequent generations, and was used interchangably with the Christogram on both coinage and in other art forms, such as sarcophagi reliefs. [30] It had the advantage of combining both the name and the cross of Christ into a single monogram. Yet, this was not apparently Constantine's practice early in his reign in the west. As the graphic evidence reveals, the Christogram and cross were separate symbols; even when appearing together, as on the Ticinese medallions or the Constantinopolitan *Labarum* coins, the Christ monogram was clearly a distinct entity.

Considering the evidence now available as a whole, it must be concluded that the *caeleste signum* on Constantine's shields at the Battle of the Mulvian Bridge was the Christogram. The emperor, following Roman religious tradition and early Christian usage, a
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[3] On Lactantius, see: J-R. Palanque, "Sur la da
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Returning finally to the disputed passage in Lactantius, it must be noted that it was *Christus* not the *crux*, the name not the cross of Christ, which the author states was marked on the shields. This marking of the name became the official version of the conversion story as seen on coin motifs minted later in the century. In the 350's, Constantine's son issued coins depicting the emperor holding the monogrammed *labarum* and surrounded by the inscription "In this sign you will be victor" [Figure 14]. Starting in the 380's, the Theodosian empresses were honored with "Safety of the Republic" bronze coins carrying reverse motifs showing an angel of victory inscribing the chi-rho on a shield [Figure 15]. [32] Thus, until a contemporary shield is found marked otherwise, it is unwarranted to assume that Constantine's shields at the Battle of the Mulvian Bridge were marked with any other sign that the Christogram, the monogrammatic name of his new divine patron, Christ.

NOTES

[1] For summaries of the modern scholarly debate over Constantine's conversion, consult: J. W. Eadie, *The Conversion of Constantine* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971), and C. Odahl, "Constantine's Conversion to Christianity," in *Problems in European History* (Durham, North Carolina: Moore, 1979).

[2] The pagan sources are two contemporary panegyrical addresses delivered to Constantine in the decade after the Mulvian Bridge Battle–*IX. Panegyricus Constantino Dictus* (313), and *X. Nazarii Panegyricus Constantino Dictus* (321). The *superstitiosa maleficia* phrase comes from ch. 4 of the former work. The latin text of both are published with French translations in *Panégyriques Latins*, Tome II, Ed. E. Galletier (Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1952). The Christian sources are Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum* (ca. 315), the Latin text of which is published in the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, Vol. XXVII, Fas.2 (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1897); and Eusebius, *De Vita Constantini* (ca. 337-38), the Greek text of which is published in *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller Der Ersten Drei Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich'ssche Buchhandlung, 1902).

[3] On Lactantius, see: J-R. Palanque, "Sur la date du *De Mortibus Persecutorum*," *Melanges offerts a J. Carcopino* (1966), pp. 711-16; and J. Stevenson, "The Life and Literary Activity of Lactantius," *Studia Patristica*, Vol. I, 1 (1957), pp. 661-77; and Norman H. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies & Other Essays*, chs. 24 & 28 on "Lactantius" (London: Univ. Press, 1960), pp. 321-25, 348-54.

[4] *De Mort. Pers.* 44 (My italics).

[5] With the numismatic and papyrological evidence now available that supports the Christian sources, the old view of a French school of scholars that Constantine's monogram was a pagan syncretistic symbol is no longer tenable. For that older view, see the articles of Grégoire and Hatt

in Fadie, *Conversion*, pp. 30-38.

6 Jacob Burckhardt, *The Age of Constantine the Great*, Tr. M. Hadas (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1949), p. 283; Andrew Alföldi, *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome*, Tr. H. Mattingly (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 16-18; A. H. M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), pp. 84-86.

7 Joseph Vogt, *The Decline of Rome*, Tr. J. Sondheimer (London: G. Weidenfeld & Nicholson Ltd., 1965), pp 87-95; Hermann Dörries, *Constantine the Great*, Tr. R. H. Bainton (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 33; Ramsay MacMullen, *Constantine* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 72.

8 *Cassell's Latin Dictionary*, Eds. J. R. V. Marchant and J. F. Charles (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1953), p. 586.

9 On Eusebius, see: Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, Vol.III (Utrecht: Spectrum, 1964), pp 309-45; F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *Eusebius Pamphili: A Study of the Man and His Writing* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1953); and D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Eusebius of Caesarea*, (Westminster, Maryland: The Canterbury Press, 1961).

10 *Vita Const.* I, 26-40.

11 *Vita Const.* I, 28; Eusebius gives it in Greek, but the official Latin version has been preserved on the imperial coinage. See Fig. 14.

12 *Vita Const.* I, 31; III, 2; IV, 21.

13 A. Alföldi, "*Hoc Signo Victor Eris:* Beiträge zur Geschichte der Bekehrung Konstantins des Grossen," *Pisciculi* Festschrift für F. J. Dölger (Munich, 1939), pp. 3-9, and *Conversion of Constantine*, pp. 17-18.

14 J. M. C. Toynbee, "A New Roman Mosaic Pavement Found in Dorset," *Journal of Roman Studies*, LIV (1964), pp. 7-14.

15 On the catacombs, see: J. Stevenson, *The Catacombs* (London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd. 1978), esp. pp. 33-34, 87-88, 143, and 146; for Christ monograms in the catacombs, see: I. Hertling, and E. Kirschbaum, *The Roman Catacombs & Their Martyrs*, tr. J. Costelloe (Milwaukee: Bruce Pub. Co., 1956).

16 Dom Henri Leclercq, "Chrisme," *Dictionnaire d' archéologie Chrétienne et de liturgie*, Vol. III, 1 (Paris: Letouzey, 1913), pp. 1485-86.

17 For standard surveys of Christian symbols on Constantinian coinage, see: Jules Maurice, *Numismatique Constantinienne*, 3 Vols. (Paris: Leroux, 1908-12); Guido Bruck, "Die Verwendung christlicher Symbole auf Munzen von Constantin I. bis Magnentius," *Numismatische Zeitschrift*, LXXVI (1955), pp. 26-32; Patrick Bruun, "The Christian Signs on the Coins of Constantine," *Arctos*, n.s., Vol. 3 (1962), pp. 5-35; and M. Pierre Bastien, "Le chrisme dans la numismatique de la dynastie Constantinienne," *Collectionneurs et Collections numismatiques* (Paris: Hôtel de la monnaie, 1968), pp. 111-119.

18 see Eusebius, *Vita Const.* IV, 52.

19 Brunn, "Christian Signs," pp. 9, 17-18, and 23-24; Bastien, "Chrisme," pp. 112-13; Alföldi, "Hoc Signo," pp. 4-5, and "The Initials of Christ on the Helmet of Constantine,"

Studies in Roman Economic and Social History 1951), pp. 303-11; Konrad Kraft, "Das S Christusmonogramm auf dem Helm," *Jahrb* pp. 151-78; J. M. C. Toynbee, *Roman Med* 1944), pp. 197, 210-11.

20 *Ibid.*

21 A contemporary literary statement w *Epistula ad Aelafium*, the Latin of which i (Paris, 1864), cols. 485-86. Cf A. Jones, "Constantine as ΚΟΙΝΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ *p. 48.*

22 Bruun, "Christian Signs," *passim.*

23 Bruun, "Christian Signs," pp. 9-17, an Helmet of Constantine with the Christian Mo pp. 9-23, and "Hoc Signo," pp. 3-6; and C. Helmet Coins," *SAN*, Vol. VIII, 4 (1977), pp

24 Bruun, "Christian Signs," pp. 19-21; Signo," p. 6.

25 Bruun, "Christian Signs," p. 17, note; Spink, 1966), p. 197.

26 Bruun, "Christian Signs," pp. 21-22; Eschatological Interpretation of Constantine"

27 Alfred R. Bellinger, "Roman and Byzant *DO Papers*, 12 (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 135-36

28 Bruun, "Christian Signs," pp. 24-25; Ba V. Hill, and J. P. C. Kent, *Late Roman Bronze*

29 Bruun, "Christian Signs," pp. 29-31, Bellinger, P. Bruun, J. P. C. Kent, and C. H. at Dumbarton Oaks: Diocletian to Eugenius

30 Alföldi, "Hoc Signo," pp. 9-10; Michae Praeger, 1974), p. 20. It might be remarked *Gloria Exercitus* reverses of the bronze coins the symbol MacMullen gives for the Constant cross, and thus, has to be ruled out of consi Signs," p. 25.

31 Constantine's Edict on Religion, in Euseb

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See Fig. 14.

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The Roman Catacombs & Their Martyrs, tr. J. Costelloe
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.," *Dictionnaire d' archéologie Chrétienne et de liturgie*, Vol.
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tian symbols on Constantinian coinage, see: Jules Maurice,
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[20] *Ibid.*

[21] A contemporary literary statement which confirms this interpretation is Constantine's *Epistula ad Aelafium*, the Latin of which is published in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. VIII (Paris, 1864), cols. 485-86. Cf A. Jones, *Constantine & Conversion*, p. 97; and J. Straub, "Constantine as ΚΟΙΝΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 21* (Washington, 1967), p. 48.

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[26] Bruun, "Christian Signs," pp. 21-22; Bastien, "Chrisme," p. 112; and C. Odahl, "An Eschatological Interpretation of Constantine's Labarum Coin," *SAN*, Vol. VI, 3 (1975), pp. 47-51.

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[29] Bruun, "Christian Signs," pp. 29-31, 33-34; Bastien, "Chrisme," p. 114; and A. R. Bellinger, P. Bruun, J. P. C. Kent, and C. H. V. Sutherland, "Late Roman Gold and Silver Coins at Dumbarton Oaks: Diocletian to Eugenius," *DO Papers*, 18 (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 183-84.

[30] Alföldi, "Hoc Signo," pp. 9-10; Michael Gough, *The Origins of Christian Art* (New York: Praeger, 1974), p. 20. It might be remarked here that an ankh style cross (☥) appeared on the *Gloria Exercitus* reverses of the bronze coins at the Aquileia mint, ca. 334-35, and approximates the symbol MacMullen gives for the Constantinian monogram; it was merely a variant of the latin cross, and thus, has to be ruled out of consideration as a monogram. See: Bruun, "Christian Signs," p. 25.

[31] Constantine's Edict on Religion, in Eusebius, *Vita Const.* II, 55.

[32] Carson, Hill, Kent, *Late Roman Bronze Coinage*, pp. 70, 89, and *passim;* Kenneth A. Jacob, *Coins and Christianity* (London: Seaby, 1959), p. 26; and C. Odahl, "Constantine's Conversion," pp. 1, and 15.

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FIGURE 1: Polychrome floor mosaic from Hinton St. Mary, Dorset, with Christogram above portrait of a young Christ, 4th c. (British Museum)

FIGURE 2: Wall painting in *arcosolium* of the catacombs of St. Comitilla depicting Sts. Peter and Paul between a Christ monogram, 4th c.

FIGURE 3: Grave Stone inscription from cemetery of Callistus with Christogram, 3rd or 4th c.

FIGURE 6: Rev
carrying a Chris
(bronze, British

FIGURE 4: Obverse of Constantine's *Salus Reipublicae* tenth anniversary medallion with chi-rho badge at the top of his war helmet, and cross scepter above his shield, 315 (silver, Munich, Staatliche Munzsamlung).

FIGURE 5: Obverse of *Victoriae Laetae Princ Perp* type of Siscia, with chi-rho sign on emperor's helmet, ca. 318-20 (bronze, British Museum plaster cast of original in Vienna, Bundessammlung).

FIGURE 10: Re
carrying Christ
334 (bronze, Bri

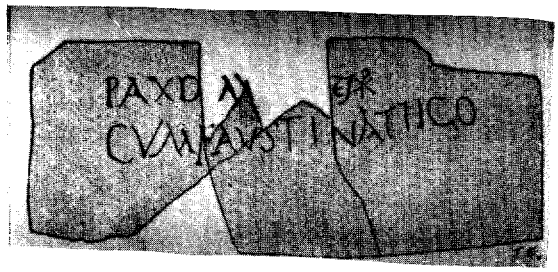

FIGURE 6: Reverse of *Virtus Exercit* type from four mints carrying a Christ monogram in the left field, ca. 319-20 (bronze, British Museum).

FIGURE 7: Obverse of *Beata Tranquillitas* type of Treves with the emperor's son carrying a monogrammed shield, ca. 322-23 (bronze, plaster cast of original in Hunterian Museum, Glasgow).

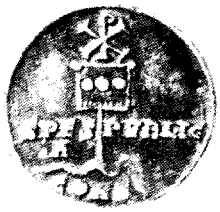

FIGURE 8: Reverse of *Spes Publica* type from Constantinople showing the emperor's *Labarum* piercing a wriggling serpent, ca. 326-28 (bronze, British Museum).

FIGURE 9: Reverse of *Constantinus Aug* medallion of Rome depicting the emperor with what appears to be a monogrammed standard, 326 (silver, Dumbarton Oaks Museum).

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sign on
. British
Vienna,
mlung).

FIGURE 10: Reverse of *Gloria Exercitus* type from Arles carrying Christ monogram in field between military standards, 334 (bronze, British Museum).

FIGURE 11: Reverse of *Gloria Exercitus* type from Arles with chi-rho on single military standard, 336 (bronze, British Museum).

FIGURE 12: Reverse of *Fel Temp Reparatio*—"Restoration of Happy Times"—type common throughout the empire showing Constantine's son Constantius II holding a *labarum* above captives, ca. 346-50 (bronze, Odahl collection).

FIGURE 13: Reverse of *Victoria Constantini Aug* type of Antioch with cross monogram in left field, ca. 336-37 (gold, Dumbarton Oaks Museum).

FIGURE 14: Reverse of *Hoc Signo Victor Eris* type from Siscia depicting the emperor with the Christogrammed *vexillum*, 350 (bronze, British Museum).

FIGURE 15: Reverse of *Salus Reipublicae* type common throughout imperial mints showing an angel inscribing a chi-rho on a war shield, 380s & ff (bronze, British Museum).

Some Observation
of Archbishop Theod

Thomas F

University

Theodulf of Orleans, called by Ann
the Carolingian Renaissance," is onc
the history of the eighth and ninth cer
the best of the Carolingian era, and m
Paranesis ad iudices and his work on t
a skilled controversialist. Finally, hi
massive Carolingian treatise against
Second Council of Nicaea in 787, ref
rare in his age.[2] Theodulf was a Goth
from Spain or from the Spanish March
do we know when he entered Charle
court for at least a few years before
Carolini in 790. In 798 Theodulf s
inspection through Septimania, and
of Orleans. Not much is known about
an important set of episcopal statutes
may legitimately conclude that he
administrator. There are, to be sure, t
Theodulf but this makes him no diffe
who, no matter how important, have o

It is not with Theodulf's substan
generalities of his career, that the follo
to contribute something to solving the
The termination of Theodulf's brillia
attention, but no consensus has emer
see. I believe that this case deserve