Decoding Symbolic Signification in Late Antiquity: An Analysis of the Adoption of the 'Constantinian' Monogram in the Fourth Century

by

Amber Lee Latimer

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Classical Archaeology

Department of History and Classics
University of Alberta

© Amber Lee Latimer, 2022

ABSTRACT

Less than a decade after the beginning of the Diocletianic Persecution (303 CE), the emperor Constantine changed the course of religious history when, on the eve of battle in 312 CE, he perceived a symbol in the sky. He would later attribute this divine vision as a sign of support from the God of the Christians, convert to Christianity, and employ the symbol – the 'Constantinian' monogram – on his new standard, the *labarum.* However, despite this seemingly straightforward narrative, there has been much discussion surrounding this pivotal event, and several points of contention have continued to arise amongst scholars. For instance, the primary sources appear to describe two different symbols (the chi-rho and the tau-rho), which has led to some confusion about the exact form the 'Constantinian' monogram took. In addition, the secondary scholarship tends to be split into two groups, either emphasizing the Christian signification of the symbol or its link to the Constantinian dynasty. More recently, however, scholars have focused on the multivalent meanings of the symbol, thus highlighting its appeal to various groups within the Roman Empire.

With a focus on social semiotic interpretation (the intersection between sign-user, context, and cultural background), my dissertation examines the meaning of both the chi-rho and the tau-rho as fourth-century symbols employed in Roman art. The core of data comes from coins and inscriptions, which can be dated and (usually) situated within a specific provenance. These examples have been further supplemented by an analysis of the pre-Constantinian uses of the symbols, the ancient sources (Eusebius, Lactantius, and Optatian), and other artefacts that have been dated to the fourth century with less certainty.

Although the development of the chi-rho as a symbol throughout the fourth century is highly complex, my study has found that when it first began to be used by Constantine, it was deployed mainly as a militaristic and dynastic symbol, a testament to the emperor's protection under God. By the middle of the fourth century, it was used more and more frequently in Christian contexts. However, I contend that above all else, the chi-rho was a powerful protective device, one that continues to be used by the Church today.

Before the fourth century, the tau-rho was already in use as a Christian scribal device and was plausibly the first visual representation of the crucifixion of Jesus, thereby firmly establishing it within a Christian milieu early on. Although not a military symbol like the chi-rho, compelling evidence suggests the tau-rho became a dynastic symbol for the Theodosian dynasty towards the end of the fourth century, which parallels the adoption of the chi-rho by the Constantinians. Lastly, this dissertation demonstrates that the chi-rho and the tau-rho held separate meanings, and the tau-rho was not a later derivative of the chi-rho. These results hold far-reaching implications for the future study of 'Christian' art in the fourth century and open other avenues (such as expanding the scope of the geographical and chronological evidence) to pursue.

PREFACE

This thesis is an original work by Amber Latimer. No part of this thesis has been previously published.

All translations of primary and secondary sources in this dissertation are my own, unless otherwise noted.

Words are flowing out like endless rain into a paper cup
They slither while they pass, they slip away across the universe
...
Limitless, undying love, which shines around me like a million suns
And calls me on and on, across the universe.

The Beatles, "Across the Universe"

For my parents, because of their limitless, undying love.

Sandra Louise Dora (Dinelle) Latimer
June 4, 1948 – September 15, 2012

Jackson Stanley Latimer
August 8, 1942 – July 1, 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

…non nobis solum nati…
Cicero (*De Officiis* 1.22)

****

This dissertation would not have happened were it not for the help and support of so many mentors, family, and friends. I would like to thank the following people, without whom I would not have succeeded:

First and foremost, I need to thank my supervisor Dr. Jeremy Rossiter, for his continued enthusiasm for my project over many(!) years. Your feedback and support allowed me to create a work of which I am truly proud. I am honoured to have been your last PhD student.

I am also so grateful to all my committee members. Firstly, Dr. Steven Hijmans and Dr. Selina Stewart – my internal committee members – for their suggestions, encouragement, and the knowledge I gained under their instruction. I will always remember the depiction of the sun on a stick in a chariot and Priam's layabout sons. Secondly, Dr. John Kitchen and Dr. Marica Cassis – my examining committee – for their willingness to read my dissertation (especially during the summer months!), kind words, and thoughts towards my future research. It is because of all of these fantastic scholars that I am able to move my work into the next stage of the journey: publishing. Lastly, Dr. Heather Coleman – Director of Graduate Studies and Chair at my defense – for your unwavering support. You have guided me through some of the worst times in the last few years and gave me the motivation I needed to finally finish.

My years at the University of Alberta would not have been half as rewarding had I not participated in a fantastic field school for 8 consecutive summers. Thank you Dr. Margriet Haagsma for having me every year and for all the adventures we had in Greece. It is truly living life at its fullest. To all of my friends and team members – including Tristan, Gino, Adam, Myles, Tracene, Laura, and Ed (to name a few) – I miss laughing with you at the Taverna. The Kastro Kallithea Archaeological Project (KKAP) will always be my home away from home.

I also need to thank Dr. Peter Baskerville and The Alberta Land Settlement and Infrastructure Project (ALSIP), without which I would not have had the funding I needed to continue being a graduate student. You provided me with opportunities that I would not have gotten otherwise and gave me the confidence I needed to take on leadership positions in the workforce. I hope that we can continue to work together in the future and publish some of the amazing findings on Albertan homesteads.

I have had so many outstanding friends over the years that have helped keep me grounded. Tristan, you have celebrated my successes and buoyed my spirits during the worst times. For that I cannot thank you enough. To all my Catan companions and the Original Joes gang, I miss seeing you every week. I also need to thank James, for reminding me that ice is slippery, and Chris, for pointing out the moon. Lindsay, Steven, Brittany, and Reid, you are more like family than friends. Bone Squad, Doom and Gloom, Halloweens in Tawatinaw, and Trivia Nights at BLAKBAR are cherished memories. Lindsay, remember: it is not George Michael!

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my family, especially my parents. Although I am very sad that they are not around to share in this accomplishment, I am so grateful for all their love and support that got me here. Luckily for me, I have so many other family members who have encouraged me to keep going and finish in recent years, such as my aunts (Regina and Debbie) and cousins. One person in particular, my cousin Rhonda, has listened to my project and offered me advice throughout the years.

Thank you everyone!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT…… ii

PREFACE…….…….... iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS…….…... vi

TABLE OF CONTENTS……. viii

LIST OF TABLES…….....….. xi

LIST OF FIGURES……..... xii

ABBREVIATIONS…….... xxi

INTRODUCTION……..... 1

PART I: CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

1. HISTORIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF THE 'CONSTANTINIAN' MONOGRAM…… 14
1.1 The First Christian Emperor……..…... 15
1.2 The 'Constantinian' Monogram as a Religious Symbol…….…. 19
1.2.1 Christian Symbolism……..... 19
1.2.2 Sol and Solar Haloes…….... 28
1.3 The 'Constantinian' Monogram as an Imperial Symbol…….… 31
1.3.1 Monogram of the House of Constantine…….…. 31
1.3.2 A New Imperial Standard: The *Labarum*……..... 33
1.4 A Multivalent Symbol…….…… 37
1.5 The Form of the 'Constantinian' Monogram……..... 40
1.6 Concluding Observations…….. 44

2. METHODOLOGY, SOCIAL SEMIOTICS, AND THE PROBLEMATIC INTERPRETATION OF MEANING……..…….... 47
2.1 The Theory of (Social) Semiotics……..……... 47
2.1.1 A Synopsis of Semiotic Theory…….…….…….. 48
2.1.2 Saint Augustine's Theory of Signs…….…….…… 54
2.1.3 Social Semiotics…….……..... 59
a) The Sign-User……. 61
b) The Influence of Culture…….…… 62
c) Context…….…... 65
2.2 Methodology…….…… 66
2.2.1 Social Semiotics and Symbols in Fourth-Century Art…….…... 66
2.2.2 Scope and Limitations…….. 73
2.3 Concluding Observations…….. 76

PART II: THE EVIDENCE

3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'CONSTANTINIAN' MONOGRAM BEFORE THE BATTLE OF THE MILVIAN BRIDGE..... 79
3.1 The Three So-Called 'Christ Monograms'..... 80
3.2 Potential Non-Christian Origins of the 'Constantinian' Monogram..... 83
3.2.1 Egyptian Influence..... 83
3.2.2 Jewish Influence..... 89
3.2.3 Non-Religious Greek Influence..... 93
a) The Greek Chi-Rho..... 93
b) The Greek Tau-Rho..... 97
3.3 Potential Christian Origins of the 'Constantinian' Monogram..... 100
3.3.1 The Magical Aspects of the Symbols..... 100
3.3.2 The *Nomina Sacra*..... 105
3.3.3 Christian Symbols before the Fourth Century..... 107
a) The 'Christian' Chi-Rho..... 107
b) The Christian Tau-Rho..... 117
3.4 Concluding Observations..... 128

4. LACTANTIUS, EUSEBIUS, AND OPTATIAN: TEXTUAL UNCERTAINTIES SURROUNDING THE SYMBOL DESCRIBED IN CONSTANTINE'S VISION..... 130
4.1 Lactantius and *De Mortibus Persecutorum*..... 131
4.1.1 Lactantius..... 131
4.1.2 *De Mortibus Persecutorum (On the Deaths of the Persecutors)*..... 133
4.1.3 Chapter XLIV..... 134
4.2 Eusebius and *Vita Constantini*..... 140
4.2.1 Eusebius..... 140
4.2.2 *Vita Constantini (The Life of Constantine)*..... 142
4.2.3 Book One, Chapters XXVIII-XXXII..... 145
4.3 Optatian and his Poetry..... 149
4.3.1 Optatian..... 149
4.3.2 The Poems..... 151
a) *Poem VIII*..... 155
b) *Poem XIV*..... 158
c) *Poem XIX*..... 159
4.4 Concluding Observations..... 164

5. THE NUMISMATIC ACCOUNT: THE USE OF THE CHI-RHO AND TAU-RHO ON FOURTH-CENTURY COINS..... 169
5.1 Audience, Authority, and Arrangement of Roman Imperial Coinage..... 170
5.2 The Coins of Constantine I..... 178
5.3 The Sons of Constantine I..... 190
5.3.1 Historical Background and the Division of the Mints..... 190
5.3.2 The Chi-rho as an Issue Mark..... 195
5.3.3 The Chi-rho as a Main Design Element..... 196
5.3.4 The Tau-rho as an Issue Mark..... 210
5.3.5 The Tau-rho as a Main Design Element..... 211
5.4 Julian the Apostate..... 213
5.5 The Second Half of the Fourth Century..... 217
5.5.1 Historical Background and the Division of the Mints..... 217
5.5.2 The Chi-rho as an Issue Mark..... 225
5.5.3 The Chi-rho as a Main Design Element..... 230
5.5.4 The Tau-rho as an Issue Mark..... 248
5.5.5 The Tau-rho as a Main Design Element..... 251
5.6 Concluding Observations..... 255

6. THE EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE: THE USE OF THE CHI-RHO AND TAU-RHO IN FOURTH-CENTURY INSCRIPTIONS…… 265
6.1 A Brief Account of Early Christian Epitaphs…….. 267
6.2 Epigraphic Evidence of the Chi-rho……. 273
6.2.1 The Chi-rho in Non-Funerary Inscriptions…….. 273
6.2.2 The Chi-rho in Funerary Inscriptions…….. 292
6.3 Epigraphic Evidence of the Tau-rho……. 311
6.3.1 The Tau-rho in Non-Funerary Inscriptions…….. 311
6.3.2 The Tau-rho in Funerary Inscriptions…….. 317
6.4 A Case Study of the 'Christian' Inscriptions from Rome……. 323
6.5 Concluding Observations…….. 333

PART III: SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS

7. THE CHI-RHO: IMPERIAL MONOGRAM, SYMBOL FOR CHRIST, AND APOTROPAIC SIGN…….. 341
7.1 The Chi-rho as an Imperial and Militaristic Symbol…… 344
7.2 The Chi-rho as a Christian Symbol…….. 355
7.3 The Chi-rho as an Apotropaic Symbol……. 374
7.4 Concluding Observations…….. 385

8. THE TAU-RHO: 'CONSTANTINIAN' MONOGRAM, CHRISTIAN SYMBOL, OR SEMIOTIC SYNONYM FOR THE CHI-RHO?..... 389
8.1 The Tau-rho as a Dynastic Symbol…….. 391
8.2 The Tau-rho as a Christian-Apotropaic Symbol…….. 394
8.3 The Interchangeability of the Tau-rho and the Chi-rho…… 407
8.4 A Final Word on the Accounts of Lactantius and Eusebius……. 412
8.5 Concluding Observations…….. 413

CONCLUSION…….. 416

BIBLIOGRAPHY…….. 421

APPENDIX A:

Coin Types (from the *RIC)* Minted between 312 CE and 408 CE…… 472

APPENDIX B:

Dated Inscriptions featuring Chi-rhos and Tau-rhos…… 519

APPENDIX C:

All Inscriptions from the *CIL* featuring Chi-rhos and Tau-rhos…….. 534

LIST OF TABLES

Table 5.1 The various coin types issued under Constantine I that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…….....…….179

Table 5.2 The various coin types issued under Constantine II that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…….. 191

Table 5.3 The various coin types issued under Constans that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…… 192

Table 5.4 The various coin types issued under Constantius II that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…….. 193

Table 5.5 The various coin types issued under Jovian that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…… 217

Table 5.6 The various coin types issued under Valentinian I that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho……. 218

Table 5.7 The various coin types issued under Valens that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…….. 219

Table 5.8 The various coin types issued under Gratian that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho……... 220

Table 5.9 The various coin types issued under Valentinian II that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…….. 222

Table 5.10 The various coin types issued under Theodosius I that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…….. 223

Table 5.11 The various coin types issued under Arcadius that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…… 224

Table 5.12 The various coin types issued under Honorius that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho…… 225

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 A baptismal stole from St. Mark's Church, Aylmer, Quebec……... 20

Figure 1.2 A section of the mosaic from Frampton, Dorset (now lost)…….. 24

Figure 1.3 A section of the wall painting from Lullingstone, Kent…… 26

Figure 1.4 *Nummus* of Constantine I minted in Thessalonica (*RIC VII* Thessalonica 66)…… 29

Figure 1.5 The *labarum* as described by Eusebius……. 33

Figure 1.6 *Nummus* of Constantine I minted in Constantinople (*RIC VII* Thessalonica 19)…… 37

Figure 2.1 Diagram of the relationship between signifier and signified according to de Saussure's theory of signs…… 48

Figure 2.2 Diagram of the relationship between object, interpretant, and representamen according to Peirce's theory of signs…….……... 51

Figure 2.3 Diagram of the interpretation of a symbol according to St. Augustine's theory of signs…….. 58

Figure 2.4 Diagram of social semiotic theory, wherein symbolic meaning is found at the intersection of context, cultural background, and sign-user experience……...……... 66

Figure 2.5 An example of a fourth-century Roman Christian aristocrat interpreting a chi-rho in a Christian catacomb as a symbol of *Christ*……. 67

Figure 2.6 An example of a fourth-century Roman pagan soldier interpreting a chi-rho on imperial currency as a symbol of the Constantinian dynasty……....68

Figure 2.7 An example of a first-century Greek scholar reading a Homeric manuscript interpreting a chi-rho as the Greek word *chreston*…..…….. 68

Figure 3.1 A Christian *stela* from Armant, Egypt. It features two chi-rhos, a tau-rho, and a *crux ansata* below the Greek inscription……. 84

Figure 3.2 A page from the *Gospel of Truth* from the Jung Codex series (Codex I, papyrus page 20) found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt……. 86

Figure 3.3 An ankh amongst a prayer to Saint Peter located in the tomb of the Valerii (near the tomb of Saint Peter in the Vatican necropolis)……. 87

Figure 3.4 The Nicanor ossuary found near the Mount of Olives…….. 92

Figure 3.5 A papyrus leaf from a *hypomnema* on Homer's *Iliad* (P.Oxy VIII 1086)…….. 95

Figure 3.6 *Hemidrachm* of Ptolemy III minted in Egypt…… 96

Figure 3.7 Bronze coin (8 *prutot*) of Herod the Great minted in Samaria…….. 98

Figure 3.8 An honorific inscription from a Roman military camp at Khan El-Abyad, Syria (*CIL III* 6660 = *ILCV* 798)……. 98

Figure 3.9 The front panel inscription from the Tomb of Gaius found in Phrygia……. 110

Figure 3.10 A funerary inscription from the catacomb of Callixtus in Rome (*ILCV* 3315 = *ICUR* 8716)…….. 112

Figure 3.11 The Gospel of Luke, passage 14:26 – 15:3 ($\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, Hanna Papyrus 1 (Mater Verbi), previously Bodmer XIV) found in Egypt……. 122

Figure 3.12 Funerary plaque of Beratius Nikatoras found in a catacomb within the Aurelian Walls of Rome……. 126

Figure 4.1 Folio 4f from a sixteenth-century manuscript featuring Optatian's *Poem VIII* (Codex Augustaneus 9 Guelferbytanus)……... 154

Figure 4.2 Folio 4r from a sixteenth-century manuscript featuring Optatian's *Poem XIX* (Codex Augustaneus 9 Guelferbytanus)……... 160

Figure 5.1 A graph of the percentages of types featuring the chi-rho and tau-rho on the coins of fourth-century emperors……. 179

Figure 5.2 A graph of the percentages of types featuring the chi-rho and tau-rho as a main iconographic design element (above) and as an issue mark (below) on the coins of the fourth-century emperors…….. 180

Figure 5.3 Silver medallion of Constantine I minted in Ticinum (*RIC VII* Ticinum 36; Type A78)……... 181

Figure 5.4 Bronze coin of Constantine I minted in Siscia (*RIC VII* Siscia 61; Type A34)…….. 183

Figure 5.5 Bronze coin of Constantine I minted in Aquileia (*RIC VII* Aquileia 58; Type A100)……. 184

Figure 5.6 Bronze coin of Constantine I minted at Arles (*RIC VII* Arles 381; Type A103)…….. 185

Figure 5.7 Bronze coin of Constantine I minted at Arles (*RIC VII* Arles 400; Type A5)…….. 185

Figure 5.8 *Solidus* of Constantine I minted in Antioch (*RIC VII* Antioch 100; Type A42)…… 186

Figure 5.9 *Nummus* of Constantine I minted in Constantinople (*RIC VII* Constantinople 19; Type A94)…… 187

Figure 5.10 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted at Aquileia (*RIC VIII* Aquileia 195; Type B22)……. 196

Figure 5.11 *Siliqua* of Constantius II minted in Trier (*RIC VIII* Trier 31; Type D1)…….. 197

Figure 5.12 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted in Siscia (*RIC VIII* Siscia 304; Type B11)…… 199

Figure 5.13 Bronze coin of Magnentius minted in Trier (*RIC VIII* Trier 319; Type B24)…… 205

Figure 5.14 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted at Rome (*RIC VIII* Rome 251; Type A34)…… 207

Figure 5.15 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted at Thessalonica (*RIC VIII* Thessalonica 132; Type B13)…….. 208

Figure 5.16 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted at Aquileia (*RIC VIII* Aquileia 186; Type B12)……. 208

Figure 5.17 *Solidus* of Constantius II minted in Trier (*RIC VIII* Trier 344; Type B6)…….. 209

Figure 5.18 *Solidus* of Constantius II minted in Thessalonica (*RIC VIII* Thessalonica 152; Type B6)…… 211

Figure 5.19 Bronze coin of Magnentius minted at Amiens (*RIC VIII* Amiens 23)…….. 212

Figure 5.20 Bronze coin of Julian minted in Cyzicus (*RIC VIII* Cyzicus 126; Type E1)…….. 214

Figure 5.21 *Siliqua* of Valentinian I minted in Siscia (*RIC IX* Siscia 12B; Type A112)…….. 226

Figure 5.22 *Gold multiple* of Valens minted in Antioch (*RIC IX* Antioch 13; Type B3)…….. 227

Figure 5.23 *Solidus* of Valens minted at Constantinople (*RIC IX* Constantinople 27; Type A37)…… 227

Figure 5.24 *Solidus* of Jovian minted in Sirmium (*RIC VIII* Sirmium 110; Type A70)…… 230

Figure 5.25 *Light miliarensis* of Valentinian I minted at Siscia (*RIC IX* Siscia 3b; Type G7)……. 232

Figure 5.26 Bronze coin of Valentinian I minted at Rome (*RIC IX* Rome 15b; Type A92)…… 235

Figure 5.27 *Gold multiple* of Valentinian I minted at Thessalonica (*RIC IX* Thessalonica 19; Type G1)…….. 235

Figure 5.28 *Gold multiple* of Gratian minted in Trier (*RIC IX* Trier 48A; Type B12)…… 238

Figure 5.29 Bronze coin of Gratian minted in Rome (*RIC IX* Rome 37; Type A21)…… 239

Figure 5.30 *Solidus* of Theodosius I minted in Constantinople (*RIC IX* Constantinople 48; Type A37)…… 241

Figure 5.31 *Siliqua* of Theodosius I minted in Constantinople (*RIC IX* Constantinople 78; Type K5)…….. 243

Figure 5.32 *Semissis* of Arcadius minted in Constantinople (*RIC X* Arcadius 18; Type K5)…… 244

Figure 5.33 *Solidus* of Arcadius minted in Constantinople (*RIC X* Arcadius 13; Type A37)…….. 246

Figure 5.34 *Solidus* of Honorius minted in Ravenna (*RIC X* Honorius 1331; Type M1)……. 247

Figure 5.35 *Solidus* of Valens minted in Antioch (*RIC IX* Antioch 17; Type H1)……... 248

Figure 5.36 *Gold multiple* of Valens minted in Antioch (*RIC IX* Antioch 14; Type A52)…… 249

Figure 5.37 Bronze coin of Valentinian II minted in Thessalonica (*RIC IX* Thessalonica 59b; Type A90)…….. 251

Figure 5.38 *Solidus* of Arcadius minted in Thessalonica (*RIC X* Arcadius 37; Type B3)…… 252

Figure 5.39 *Solidus* of Honorius minted in Ravenna (*RIC X* Honorius 1310; Type M2)……. 254

Figure 5.40 A mint mark ('P') on a 2017 American penny…… 256

Figure 5.41 A graph of the percentages of chi-rhos used as the main design element, excluding the *labarum*, on the coins of fourth-century emperors…….. 257

Figure 5.42 A graph of the percentages of chi-rhos and tau-rhos used by each mint either as issue marks (above) or main design elements (below) on the coins of fourth-century emperors……. 259

Figure 5.43 A graphic representation of the amount of types with chi-rhos and tau-rhos as main design elements, issue marks, or legends on the coins of fourth-century emperors…….. 260

Figure 5.44 A graph of the percentages of the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho on gold, silver, and bronze coins in the fourth century……... 263

Figure 6.1 An inscription on a milestone found on the road between Cuicul (Djemila) to Lambaesis……... 275

Figure 6.2 A *mensa martyrum* (*CIL VIII* 21517 = *ILCV* 2071) from Médiouna, Mauretania Tingitana (modern Morocco)…….…… 279

Figure 6.3 A *mensa martyrum* (*CIL VIII 20600)* from Tixter, Numidia Cirtensis (modern Algeria)…….. 280

Figure 6.4 Two graffiti on a fresco from the House of Fausta in the Lateran……. 282

Figure 6.5 An honorific inscription on a bronze plaque from Agginum (modern Agen, France)…… 285

Figure 6.6 A gold currency bar from Sirmium, Pannonia (modern Serbia)……. 288

Figure 6.7 A map of the distribution of the chi-rho across the Roman Empire in non-funerary contexts……. 291

Figure 6.8 A graphic representation of the percentages of use of the chi-rho and tau-rho in funerary and non-funerary inscriptions in the fourth century…….. 292

Figure 6.9 A funerary inscription from the cemetery of Cyriaca in Rome (*ILCV* 3257 = *ICUR* 17425)…… 293

Figure 6.10 A graphic representation of the number of occurrences of the chi-rho in funerary inscriptions throughout the fourth century……... 296

Figure 6.11 A map of the distribution of the chi-rho across the Roman Empire in funerary contexts…… 298

Figure 6.12 The funerary inscription of Sisinnius, found in the cemetery of St Agnes, Rome (*ICUR* 20769)……... 301

Figure 6.13 Preserved fragment of a funerary inscription from Rome that features an early Christian poem from Constantia to her husband (*ILCV* 2451 = *ICUR* 8420)…… 302

Figure 6.14 A close-up of the right side of the funerary inscription of Eleuteria found in Rome (*ILCV* 3359 = *ICUR* 1426)…….. 308

Figure 6.15 A funerary inscription on a marble tablet from a cemetery on the Via Latina, Rome (*ILCV* 4942 = *ICUR* 15780)……. 309

Figure 6.16 Agate pendant of the empress Maria, possibly from Milan (*ILCV* 15 = Spier 752)……. 314

Figure 6.17 A map of the distribution of the tau-rho across the Roman Empire in non-funerary contexts……. 315

Figure 6.18 A funerary inscription from the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome…….. 317

Figure 6.19 A map of the distribution of the tau-rho across the Roman Empire in funerary contexts…… 318

Figure 6.20 A pie chart with the percentages of Latin and Greek inscriptions in the *ICUR* that contain either a chi-rho or tau-rho (or both)……. 324

Figure 6.21 A graphic representation of the percentages of chi-rhos and tau-rhos used in inscriptions from Rome with other common 'Christian' motifs……. 325

Figure 6.22 The epitaph of Victor from the catacombs on the Via Appia (*ICUR* 13226)…….. 328

Figure 6.23 A Greek inscription from the Via Latina, Rome (*ICUR* 15868)……. 329

Figure 6.24 A Greek inscription from the catacomb of Domitilla (*ICUR* 7249 = *IGC* 509 = *ILCV* 2328)…… 331

Figure 6.25 A funerary inscription for Victoria from Rome (*ICUR* 1783)……. 332

Figure 6.26 A funerary inscription from Naples, Italy (*ICUR* 2852)……. 335

Figure 6.27 Funerary inscription from the catacomb of Callixtus (*ICUR* 10783)…….. 336

Figure 6.28 A heat map detailing the proportional geographical distribution (number of inscriptions with the symbol divided by total number of inscriptions per area) of inscriptions with a chi-rho across the Roman Empire, excluding Rome, as found in the *CIL*……... 338

Figure 6.29 A heat map detailing the proportional geographical distribution (number of inscriptions with the symbol divided by total number of inscriptions per area) of inscriptions with a tau-rho across the Roman Empire, excluding Rome, as found in the *CIL*……... 339

Figure 7.1 Fourth-century milestones along army routes in Roman North Africa……... 345

Figure 7.2 A reconstructed Roman helmet with a chi-rho appliqué. It was found in the Meuse Valley (Limburg, Netherlands) as a part of a hoard……. 347

Figure 7.3 *Missorium* of Constantius II found near Kerch, Crimea……. 349

Figure 7.4 Mosaic from the Basilica of San Vitale (Ravenna) featuring the emperor Justinian……. 350

Figure 7.5 The roundel from the Hinton St Mary mosaic……. 352

Figure 7.6 A gold-glass roundel featuring the Saints Peter, Paul, Lawrence, and Cyprian…… 358

Figure 7.7 Gold-glass medallion decorated with St Peter and St Paul, who are seated……. 359

Figure 7.8 A gold-glass medallion with two figures standing between seven baskets of bread……. 361

Figure 7.9 Gold-glass medallion depicting two parents and their daughter……. 362

Figure 7.10 A gold-glass fragment with St Lawrence…… 363

Figure 7.11 A silver votive plaque from the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire (Painter 1977, no. 18)……..…….. 365

Figure 7.12 A silver votive plaque dedicated by Anicilla from the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire (Painter 1977, no. 12)…… 365

Figure 7.13 A silver bowl from the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire (Painter 1977, no. 8)…… 367

Figure 7.14 A silver bowl from the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire (Painter 1977, no. 9)…… 368

Figure 7.15 A silver spoon (*cochlear*) from the Hoxne hoard in Suffolk (Johns 2010, no. 135)…….. 369

Figure 7.16 A lead (baptismal?) tank from Walesby, Licolnshire…….. 372

Figure 7.17 Plaster surrounding a burial niche at the catacombs of Domitilla, Rome (*ICUR* 8092a)……... 381

Figure 7.18 The tombstone of Marcus and Karisia (*ICUR* 6499)……... 383

Figure 7.19 A timeline illustrating the multivalent semiotic meanings that the chi-rho held in the fourth century…….. 386

Figure 8.1 A bronze statuette of St Peter (Carder 1979, no. 509)……. 392

Figure 8.2 A depiction of the *tradition legis* on the Geminus Sarcophagus from Saint Trophime, Arles……. 393

Figure 8.3 An amulet featuring an *orans*…….. 397

Figure 8.4 A silver ladle from the Hoxne hoard in Suffolk (Johns 2010, no. 54)…… 399

Figure 8.5 A gold necklace from the Hoxne hoard in Suffolk (Johns 2010, no. 4)…… 399

Figure 8.6 The 'Projecta casket' from the Esquiline treasure from Rome……... 401

Figure 8.7 A red jasper gem featuring a negative image of a tau-rho on its side……... 403

Figure 8.8 A nicolo gem that features a tau-rho between the busts of a woman and a man…… 403

Figure 8.9 A jasper gem that features two men facing each other. They are likely the apostles Peter and Paul…… 404

Figure 8.10 A brown sard gem that features Hercules, with his head bent downwards and Eros…… 405

Figure 8.11 A representation of the intersection between the uses of the chi-rho and the tau-rho……... 411

Figure 8.12 A timeline illustrating the multivalent semiotic meanings that the tau-rho held in the fourth century…….. 414

ABBREVIATIONS

AE	L'Année Épigraphique
AJN	American Journal of Numismatics
AJP	American Journal of Philology
AnatSt	Anatolian Studies
ANS	American Numismatic Society
AntAfr	Antiquités africaines
ArchRW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft
ArtB	The Art Bulletin
BAntFr	Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France
BJb	Bonner Jahrbücher des rheinischen Landesmuseums in Bonn und des Vereins von Altertumsfreunden im Rheinlande
BMQ	British Museum Quarterly
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
CP	Classical Philology
CR	Classical Review
EDB	Epigraphic Database Bari
ICG	Inscriptiones Christianae Graecae
ICUR	Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae
IGCVO	Inscriptiones Graecae Christianae Veteres Occidentis
ILCV	Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres
ILS	Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JRA	Journal of Roman Archaeology
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
JSAH	Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians
NAC	Numismatica Ars Classica
NC	Numismatic Chronicle
ÖJh	Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen Instituts in Wien
PBSR	Papers of the British School at Rome
RBPhil	Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire
RIB	The Roman Inscriptions of Britain
RIC	The Roman Imperial Coinage
RM	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung
SEG	Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum
StPap	Studia papyrologica
TAPA	Transactions of the American Philological Association
YCS	Yale Classical Studies

INTRODUCTION

> *It is a bitter thought, how different a thing the Christianity of the world might have been, if the Christian faith had been adopted as the religion of the empire under the auspices of Marcus Aurelius instead of those of Constantine.*
>
> John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859)

****

Constantine I's adoption of the Christian faith came after one specific – and pivotal – moment in history. While Constantine and his troops were preparing to engage the usurper Maxentius in battle by the Tiber River, they saw a symbol in the sky. The emperor would later claim that the divine vision he received before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 CE came from the God of the Christians. This important event brought the religion, so recently persecuted by Constantine's predecessors, into the mainstream, and Christian art truly began to flourish for the first time.[1] As Constantine gradually took over sole control of the empire, Christian symbols began to appear on objects with more and more frequency.

But what symbol did Constantine see before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, and what was its signification? Determining the answers to these two questions will form the framework of this dissertation. As will become apparent both in this introduction and throughout my dissertation, there is little consensus about the nature of the divine symbol that Constantine saw on the eve of battle with Maxentius. Indeed, the complexities surrounding the 'Constantinian' monogram were already apparent in the fourth century when the ancient authors Eusebius and

[1] Hinson (1995), 187; and Jensen (2000a), 753. According to Jensen, pre-fourth-century Christian art usually only appears in funerary contexts, such as catacombs and sarcophagi. However, we should consider Jensen's assessment of early Christian art cautiously as it is often difficult to differentiate Christian from non-Christian art before the fourth century.

Lactantius, both of whom were writing while Constantine was still alive, seemingly described two different symbols: the chi-rho and the tau-rho.

The chi-rho (☧) monogram, which is also commonly referred to as a 'chrismon,' is a symbol formed by combining the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ (Χριστός). The tau-rho (Ꝑ), on the other hand, is a textual abbreviation of the Greek words for cross (σταυρός) and crucify (σταυρόω). In scholarship, the tau-rho is often called a 'staurogram' or 'monogrammatic cross' in reference to its linguistic origin. To further complicate the nomenclature, the terms 'Christ monogram' and 'christogram' can refer to either the chi-rho or the tau-rho.[2] While the two symbols linguistically signify, at the very least, different words, the fact that they both reference Jesus has led some scholars – such as Goodson (2017), Gordon (1983), and Marruchi (1912) – to lump both symbols together under the general heading of 'christogram.' One notable example of this trend in scholarship can be found with Charles Thomas (1981).[3] He hypothesizes that the tau-rho is a later derivative of the chi-rho.

Even in more recent scholarship, the two symbols are conflated and presented as holding the same signification. For example, David Petts' entry in the *Oxford Handbook to Roman Britain* (2016) says that the chi-rho symbol is found in "two forms in Britain, the 'Constantinian chi-rho' and the simpler rho-cross."[4] In the recently published *Graphic Signs of Identity, Faith, and Power in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (2017), Caroline Goodson – in her article discussing christograms on North African lamps – states that the "emblems which bore combinations of the letters chi-rho or iota-chi, or a cross with the letter rho (also known as the

[2] Sulzberger (1925) wrote a treatise on the three earliest Christ monograms, including the chi-rho and the tau-rho. I will discuss his analysis in further detail in Chapter 3. Hurtado (2006a: 139) notes that even though both the chi-rho and the tau-rho reference Jesus, the tau-rho is not a true christogram, as it is not an abbreviation for Christ's name.
[3] Even more recently, Puică (2010: 13) mentions that the chi-rho converted into the tau-rho.
[4] Petts (2016), 663. For more on this quote, see Chapter 8.

staurogram) are generally held to be insignia of Christ's title, Χριστός, or name and title, Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς…."[5] However, neither Petts' analysis of the chi-rho in Britain nor Goodson's assessment of the 'staurogram' as an insignia of Christ's title consider the linguistic origins of the signs.

In order to more accurately reflect the linguistic origins and later development of the symbols, I will not automatically assume at the outset of my investigation that the two symbols were synonymous or that the one was a later version of the other. Both symbols will be treated as separate entities throughout in order to determine if they were, indeed, used interchangeably and whether or not they held the same meaning for the ancient viewer. The use of multiple terms for each symbol, two of which even overlap, is equally problematic as it can confuse researchers, especially when authors do not include images of the objects they are discussing. In order to remain consistent with terminology, I will only refer to the symbols as 'chi-rho' and 'tau-rho' unless quoting another scholar directly. When speaking about the symbol in general terms, especially in the first few chapters, or in cases where it is unclear which symbol a secondary source is discussing, I will use the term 'Constantinian' monogram apropos of Constantine's vision.

Even though the confusion surrounding the exact form of Constantine's divine symbol is problematic, the importance of the 'Constantinian' monogram, both in the fourth century and beyond, has taken a secondary role to the analysis of Constantine's conversion, which scholars have debated for centuries with no consensus being reached on the reasons for his conversion,

[5] Goodson (2017), 256. Since Roman lamps are difficult to date with any certainty and no examples with either the chi-rho or the tau-rho can be firmly dated to the fourth century, I will not be examining the use of the symbols on lamps in my dissertation (see also Ch. 8, fn. 24).

the degree to which he supported the Church, or the level to which he tolerated other religions.[6] These debates have usually involved comparing the literary sources for information regarding his conversion, a problematic endeavour, as the chief source on Constantine's adoption of Christianity is Eusebius, whose pro-Christian standpoint is reflected throughout his work. The focus of secondary scholarship on the veracity of Constantine's conversion in the literary sources has meant that the study of the 'Constantinian' monogram as a fourth-century symbol has often been neglected.

In addition, while this fundamentally historical argument has continued, the material evidence has played a secondary role in understanding the symbol found at the centre of Constantine's *mythos* of conversion. When the symbol is mentioned in secondary scholarship, it is often only touched upon momentarily as a part of the divine vision Constantine received before his confrontation with Maxentius. The author's discussion will often then move swiftly on to other relevant information about Constantine and his conversion, such as his support of the Church and his other Christian endeavours.[7] Even André Grabar's book, *Christian Iconography: A Study of Its Origins* (1968), only briefly discusses the 'Constantinian' monogram and its use as a Christian symbol in the fourth century.[8] However, there are those in recent years – such as Bardill (2012), Hurtado (2006a), and Garipzanov (2018) – who have endeavoured to bridge the

[6] On the conversion of Constantine see, for instance: Barnes (1973); Coleman (1968); Elliott (1990); Jones (1978); and Keresztes (1981); and, more recently, Barnes (2014); Drake (2017); Edwards (2017); Leithart (2010); Lenski (2016a); and Potter (2013). The best concise analysis of the primary and secondary sources involved in the early history of this debate is still Eadie (1971) who outlines the various standpoints of prominent scholars at the time. His book divides scholars into three main categories: those who believe that Constantine was a political pragmatist; those who think he was a 'pagan' syncretist; and those who argue that he was a true Christian convert. According to Eadie, the majority of scholars tend to believe Constantine was a true Christian convert. Barnes (1973: 46), however, is a notable exception who states that Constantine's conversion to Christianity was purely motivated by political reasons.

[7] See, for instance, Brent (2009), 281; Coleman (1968), 78-79; Gould (2007), 127-128; James (2012), 64-68; Leithart (2010), 71-79; Pohlsander (2004), 23-24; and Potter (2013), 143.

[8] Grabar (1968), 38-40. Although brief, Grabar does argue that Constantine's adoption of the symbol imbued it with a military signification, something that will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

gap in scholarship and discuss the 'Constantinian' monogram more thoroughly. But despite these recent attempts, even when the symbol becomes the focus of a discussion and is considered more in-depth, it is usually only done as part of the analysis of an individual artefact or within the context of a specific assemblage type from one area of the empire.

One such artefact that has received much attention from scholars and on which a considerable amount has been written is the Hinton St Mary mosaic (see Chapter 7 and **Figure 7.5**). Discovered in 1963 in Hinton St Mary in the county of Dorset, England, the Hinton St Mary mosaic was found in the remains of a fourth-century Roman villa.[9] The reason that this particular mosaic has been studied in such detail is because of the 'Constantinian' monogram – in this instance a chi-rho (☧) – behind the male bust in the central medallion, which had led some to believe that it represents one of the first images of Christ on a mosaic. But while an in-depth analysis like this is beneficial for furthering our understanding of specific artefacts, it does not allow for any generalizations about the properties and functions of the 'Constantinian' monogram as a symbol itself. Nor does looking at an object in isolation provide us with an understanding of the uses of the symbol outside of that particular context, time period, and location. This is detrimental to our understanding of the semiotic importance of the symbol and makes any attribution of meaning to the other imagery present in proximity to it, such as the bust in the Hinton St Mary mosaic, problematic.

Another type of analysis that scholarship has focused on in regards to the study of the 'Constantinian' monogram is the examination of the uses of the symbol in specific parts of the empire on certain types of objects, such as Goodson's (2017) analysis of christograms on North African lamps or Mackensen's (2007) examination of christograms on helmets from the Danube

[9] For more information on the mosaic, see Painter (1967); Pearce (2008); and Toynbee (1964).

region. In particular, much has been written about assemblages of 'Christian' metal artefacts from hoards found in Roman Britain (see Chapters 7 and 8).[10] This might be because of the significant quantity of metal objects, especially those made from silver, that have been discovered engraved with the 'Constantinian' monogram.[11] The artefacts themselves are highly varied, including personal items such as rings, but also other more functional objects such as a strainer from the Water Newton treasure and a number of lead tanks from Icklingham.[12] Unfortunately, observations about these assemblages, including any stylistic variations that have been found, have not been applied to objects from elsewhere in the empire, and so it is difficult to say how the 'Constantinian' monogram was employed, either in a similar or different fashion, not only across the empire but also on different types of material.

This dissertation, then, proceeds from the lack of scholarship on empire-wide material evidence with the 'Constantinian' monogram and the lack of understanding about the uses of the chi-rho and the tau-rho as fourth-century symbols. Because of the complexities dating material remains, I will focus my examination primarily on the numismatic and epigraphic evidence. The relevance of studying these two categories of objects is not only based on limiting the scope of my data to the fourth century, but the provenance of both coins and epigraphs are often reliably established. Furthermore, both coins and inscriptions have comprehensive compendia – such as the *Roman Imperial Coinage (RIC)* and the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (CIL)* – available to

[10] See, for example, Allason-Jones (2011); Esmonde Cleary (1989); Pearce (2004); Petts (2003); and Thomas (1981). When the chi-rho is discussed in these sources, it is usually mentioned in a chapter on Christianity in Roman Britain. According to Thomas (1981: 88) the earliest version of what he terms the "chi-rho" has been called the Constantinian type and is usually found on material from the fourth century.

[11] In fact, Pearce (2008: 201) argues that the chi-rho was used in Britain, as well as in Gaul and Northern Italy, as an indicator of imperial authority. This might provide some explanation as to why there are so many artefacts found with the symbol throughout the empire without having to automatically apply a specifically Christian interpretation to the finds.

[12] Petts (2003), 104. The lead tanks might be baptismal fonts. For more information on these lead tanks, see Chapter 7.

facilitate research. Finally – as will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 1, 5, and 6 – the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho on coins and inscriptions from the fourth century have not been the subject of any recent, all-inclusive studies. Rather, the scholarship has been restricted to certain types of coins minted under certain fourth-century emperors or individual inscriptions discussed in isolation.

Therefore, within these aforementioned limits, this study will explore the following questions:

- How did the chi-rho and the tau-rho develop as symbols? Were they symbols before the time of Constantine, and, if so, what influenced their development? (Chapter 3)
- How is the 'Constantinian' monogram described in the accounts of fourth-century authors? How should we address conflicting information? (Chapter 4)
- How were the chi-rho and the tau-rho minted on coins? Are either of the symbols prominent on the coins of fourth-century emperors and does their use overlap? (Chapter 5)
- How are the chi-rho and the tau-rho depicted in fourth-century epigraphs? Are there any consistencies or differences between how the symbols were used on epitaphs and non-funerary inscriptions? (Chapter 6)
- What are the semiotic similarities and differences between the chi-rho and the tau-rho? And, finally, what are the possible meanings that these symbols signified to the ancient viewer and sign-user? (Chapters 7 and 8)

The fourth century was a time of significant religious change throughout the Roman Empire and it is therefore an important period for the study of religious symbols and iconography. Despite this, there have been no systematic studies of the so-called 'Christ' symbols that came to be prevalent in art during that time. This study seeks to remedy this gap in the literature by answering the above questions.

In order to thoroughly tackle these topics, my dissertation is divided into three main parts. The first part orients my research within the greater framework of the study of the

'Constantinian' monogram. Chapter 1 provides a synopsis of the secondary scholarship surrounding Constantine and the 'Constantinian' monogram. The chapter includes an analysis of the various interpretations of the symbol. As we will see, much of the contemporary scholarship has emphasized the religious signification of the 'Constantinian' monogram, which has far-reaching implications for the interpretation of 'Christian' iconography and the dating of artifacts to the fourth century. A second subset of authors have argued that the 'Constantinian' monogram was a dynastic symbol, using coins to demonstrate a direct visual link to the imperial family. In more recent years, however, the trend has been to discuss the multivalent meanings of the symbol. The chapter ends with a discussion of the form of the 'Constantinian' monogram and how there is conflicting evidence as to whether the symbol from Constantine's vision is a chi-rho or tau-rho.

In Chapter 2 I discuss methodology and social semiotics, the theoretical background that will guide the study and form the foundation of my analysis. I begin with a discussion of Saint Augustine's theory of signs, since he was writing within a century of the development of the 'Constantinian' monogram. According to Augustine, given signs – such as the chi-rho and the tau-rho – are agreed upon by convention. Social semiotics moves beyond Augustine's limited theory of signs by arguing that the interpretation of signs is dependent on the background of the sign-user, their culture, and the social contexts in which the signs are found. The second part of the Chapter 2 will place social semiotic theory within the context of the study of fourth-century art. Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion on the scope and limitations of examining the 'Constantinian' monogram on coins and inscriptions.

The second part of my dissertation consists of four chapters and focuses on evidence for the uses of the 'Constantinian' monogram – from this point onwards frequently discussed

separately as chi-rho and the tau-rho – both before and during the fourth century. Chapter 3 focuses on the potential origins and the development of the monogram before it was adopted under Constantine. In particular, it looks at the Egyptian, Jewish, and Greek influences on the evolution of both the chi-rho and the tau-rho. The second half of the chapter looks at the potential Christian origins of the 'Constantinian' monogram, including magical (or apotropaic) properties, and the uses of the chi-rho and tau-rho as *nomina sacra* and scribal devices.

Following this, Chapter 4 focuses on the literary accounts of the adoption of the 'Constantinian' monogram under Constantine, as detailed by Lactantius and Eusebius and as rendered by Optatian. Lactantius details the symbol in Constantine's vision in Chapter XLIV of his *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, which was written between 312 and 316 CE. The sign described in this passage has been much contested and scholars still have not reached a consensus about whether Lactantius was detailing a tau-rho or a chi-rho. Much less vague is the explanation of Constantine's vision that appears in Book One of Eusebius' *Vita Constantini*. A more detailed version than that written by Lactantius, Eusebius describes the symbol as a *rho* down over the middle of a *chi*. While less ambiguous than Lactantius' account, Eusebius was writing about two decades later and, consequently, was further removed temporarily from the events that occurred at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. To further complicate the study of the form of Constantine's saving sign we have four surviving poems from the poet Optatian that depict the chi-rho. Writing about a decade before Constantine's death in 337 CE, these poems (*versus intexti*) contain hidden messages within a patterned design that could be decoded by the poem's reader. Therefore, Optatian and Eusebius – although they were writing decades later than Lactantius – align in their presentation of the 'Constantinian' monogram.

Having examined the 'Constantinian' monogram before the fourth century and in the primary sources, the final two chapters in Part II turn to the material evidence. These chapters form the core of the datable evidence featuring the symbols. Chapter 5 looks at the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho on imperial coins from the fourth century. I begin by discussing the audience, authority, and arrangement of coins, before moving on to numismatic evidence. The chapter is divided into four main chronological sections: the coins of Constantine I; the coins of Constantine's sons; the coins of the emperor Julian; and the coins of the Valentinians and Theodosians. By examining the uses of the chi-rho and the tau-rho on coins of different denomination, from different mints, and under different authorities, we gain a better understanding of any potential distinctions between the two symbols.

In Chapter 6, I present data on the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho in securely dated fourth-century inscriptions found throughout the empire. The chapter begins with a brief description of early 'Christian' epitaphs, which provides background to the fourth-century funerary evidence presented later in the chapter. As we will see, it is difficult to separate early 'Christian' funerary inscriptions from their contemporary 'pagan' counterparts.[13] Even when Christian epitaphs became more overt in the fourth century, the intended meaning behind the use of symbols remained complicated. The majority of the remainder of the chapter highlights these complications by examining patterns of use in the epigraphic evidence – in both funerary and non-funerary inscriptions. As we will see, datable evidence with either the chi-rho or the tau-rho is sporadic until the middle of the fourth century. For this reason, I conclude the chapter with an

[13] For the sake of brevity, I will refer to traditional Roman religions as 'pagan.' However, I would like to note that this term is problematic, as it lumps together all non-Christian religious beliefs in the Roman period and does not consider the diversity of these various religions. It also implies a rigid Christian-pagan dichtomy that is itself problematic as religious adherence is much more fluid and each individual could fall anywhere on the spectrum of strict 'pagan' to strict Christian devotee.

overview of the 'Christian' inscriptions from Rome; in other words, any inscription – regardless of date – found in the *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae* with either symbol. This case study supplements the evidence provided in the first part of the chapter. Any patterns of use determined in this chapter will allow us to hypothesise not only on how the symbols were used but also the meanings they may have held for the ancient viewer.

Part III of my dissertation contains two chapters that synthesize and analyze the information provided in Part II. Chapter 7 summarizes the evidence found in Chapters 3 through 6 on the uses of the chi-rho and presents additional material – apart from inscriptions and coins – that has been generally dated to the fourth century. The chapter is divided into three sections that look at the meaning of the chi-rho as an imperial monogram, a Christian symbol, and an apotropaic talisman. In this way, various layers of signification are explored based on the literary and material evidence from the fourth century.

Chapter 8 provides a similar type of analysis with the tau-rho. First, I summarize the evidence presented in Part II and then I expand on it with other material dated (more loosely) to the fourth century. By bringing in supplementary evidence, I can establish if the patterns of meaning found on the datable coins and inscriptions are transferable to other types of objects. Like in Chapter 7, the dynastic and (Christian) apotropaic properties of the symbol are explored in detail. Additionally, this final chapter also looks at the semiotic relationship between the tau-rho and the chi-rho and whether or not the ancient viewer would have considered the two symbols interchangeable. The chapter concludes with a final word on whether or not reconciling the accounts of Lactantius and Eusebius is needed to understand the 'Constantinian' monogram.

****

At the beginning of this introduction, I presented a quote by the English philosopher John Stuart Mill. In his work *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill states that one of the greatest tragedies in history was that the emperor Marcus Aurelius, who was "a better Christian in all but the dogmatic sense of the word than almost any of the ostensibly Christian sovereigns who have since reigned" sanctioned the persecution of the Christians.[14] He continues by saying that the Christianity of the 19th century, when he was writing, would have been much different had it been adopted under Marcus Aurelius instead of Constantine. After praising Marcus Aurelius in the preceding paragraph, we can assume that Mill was not favourable towards how the religion developed under the emperor Constantine. While it is interesting to contemplate how the course of history would have been altered had another emperor been the first to adopt Christianity as their faith– or if Christianity had not been adopted at all – this quote also allows us to contemplate the nature of the 'Constantinian' monogram and whether or not the symbol would have been as prolific in the fourth century had Constantine not adopted it as his saving sign. Under the reign of Marcus Aurelius, would we instead be talking about the 'Aurelian' monogram? Was the symbol already established as a Christian symbol two centuries before Constantine? Was it set on a trajectory to have developed as a Christian symbol under another emperor? Or was it so intimately connected with the Constantinian dynasty that it would not have flourished as it did solely as a symbol of Christ? By the end of this dissertation, we will have a more thorough understanding of the deployment of both the chi-rho and tau-rho in the fourth century and I will be able to offer an answer to these questions.

[14] Mill (2007), 85-86.

PART I

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF THE 'CONSTANTINIAN' MONOGRAM

> *In this state of uncertainty, as he was marching at the head of his troops, a preternatural vision, which transcends all description, appeared to him. In fact, about that part of the day when the sun after passing the meridian begins to decline towards the west, he saw a pillar of light in the heavens, in the form of a cross, on which were inscribed these words, BY THIS CONQUER.*
>
> Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 1.2.3-4

****

This chapter conducts a historiographical review of the scholarship written about the 'Constantinian' monogram. It begins with a high-level overview of the historical background pertinent to the development of the symbol: the elevation of Constantine to the position of emperor in 306 CE until his death in 336 CE. In this way, the use of the 'Constantinian' monogram after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 CE can be placed within its historical context. I follow the historical synopsis with an in-depth analysis of the major trends and hypotheses surrounding the 'Constantinian' monogram presented in the secondary scholarship. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion of the uncertainty surrounding which symbol Constantine adopted as the 'saving sign of Christ' after his divine vision – the chi-rho or the tau-rho[1] – a topic that recurs throughout my dissertation and about which neither the ancient sources nor modern scholars agree.

[1] Although this chapter explores the secondary scholarship surrounding both the chi-rho and the tau-rho, the majority of the discussion to follow focuses on the chi-rho. This highlights a trend and bias in the secondary scholarship (see also Ch. 1.1).

1.1 THE FIRST CHRISTIAN EMPEROR

As mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, a decisive moment in the history of Western civilization occurred in the fourth century when the emperors of the Roman Empire switched their religious affiliation from the traditional Roman religions, or 'pagan' religions, to Christianity. Although the events that led to this switch may have been building up for decades, if not centuries, it nevertheless took only one emperor to change his religion for the remainder of the emperors, with the exception of one, to continue to follow his decision and adhere to the Christian faith. Constantine I (306-337) was the emperor who undertook this significant step towards monotheism. According to Ehrman, it was not Constantine's conversion to Christianity itself that was so momentous and led to the spread of Christianity throughout the empire.[2] Rather, it was that in a single moment, the religion that the imperial court had so recently persecuted was suddenly supported by it.

Born towards the end of the third century CE, Constantine I was the son of Constantius Chlorus, who had been elevated to the position of western Caesar under co-emperors Diocletian and Maximian in 293 CE. In 305 CE, Diocletian decided to retire, a move that had never been done by any other emperor before. He also convinced his co-emperor Maximian to retire, which led to the elevation of Constantius Chlorus and Galerius, Caesar in the east, to the status of Augusti. However, instead of elevating Maximian's son Maxentius and Constantius Chlorus' son Constantine to the position of Caesar, Diocletian ignored hereditary succession and promoted Maximinus Daia and Severus as the new Caesars. Being passed over pleased neither Constantine nor Maxentius, and when Constantine's father died in 306 CE in York, Constantine was quickly proclaimed emperor by his father's troops.

[2] Ehrman (2018), 13-14.

Outside of the above-mentioned events happening within the imperial court, the beginning of the fourth century was also a time of great religious persecution for Christians throughout the empire (303-313 CE). Although the majority of the persecutions took place in the eastern portion of the empire under the control of Diocletian and Galerius, they also occured in the west, especially in North Africa. Across the empire, those Christians who resisted converting to the traditional Roman religions and stopped supporting the cult of the emperor were also sentenced to death. According to Lactantius, the majority of the persecutory zeal in the west was held by Maximian, while Constantius Chlorus, who willingly destroyed churches, did not sentence anyone to death.[3] However, Lactantius' report of Constantius Chlorus' actions might not be factual, as he would hardly have been able to condemn the current emperor's father even if Constantius Chlorus had fully participated in the Diocletianic Persecution. Even Constantine, after he first became emperor, did not initially stop the Christian persecutions. They continued in the east under Galerius (until he issued an edict of peace in 311 CE) and Maximinus Daia (until Licinius and Constantine issued the so-called Edict of Milan in 313 CE).[4] It was within this political and religious milieu that Constantine prepared to enter into battle with Maxentius in 312 CE.

After his victory, Constantine became the emperor of the western portion of the empire and his co-emperor, Licinius, took control of the east. Whatever the reason for his conversion to Christianity – political or true conversion – it appears that at this point, Constantine fully committed himself to the support of Christianity, such as by relieving clergy from the financial

[3] Lactant. *De Mort. Pers.* 15.7. See also De Ste. Croix (2006), 54-55; Fairbairn & Reeves (2019), 44-45; Gaddis (2005), 33-35; and Green (2010a), 207-213.
[4] Lactant. *De Mort. Pers*. 33-35 and 48. The Edict of Milan was not an edict but a letter sent by Licinius granting Christians in the east the freedom to practice their religion (Cameron 1993: 51).

and administrative responsibilities of the curial office in 313 CE.[5] Churches also began to benefit from Constantine's favour. He bestowed gifts and property on them and, shortly after defeating Maxentius, the emperor began to build several churches in Rome.[6] But while Constantine took action to support the religion, Christianity at the start of the fourth century was far from stable, and once it had become an acceptable religion within the empire, the schisms that had formed within Christianity came into the spotlight.

After Constantine had defeated Licinius in 324 CE and became the sole ruler of the empire, he began to promote the churchmen he favoured while at the same time opposing those with whom he disagreed.[7] He even contributed his own theological analyses to doctrinal debates, such as in June 325 CE when he presided over the ecumenical council at Nicaea.[8] This council was the culmination of theological disagreements in Alexandria between Arius and Alexander, a priest and bishop, respectively.[9] The two men argued about the relationship between Christ and God. Arius believed that the Son (Christ) was created by the Father (God); therefore, the son could not be of the same essence as the father and was thus subordinate to the father. On the other hand, Alexander was convinced that the Son and the Father were of the same substance (*homoousion)* and were therefore equals.[10] The attempts to reconcile Arius and Alexander were unsuccessful, and at the council of Nicaea, the relationship between Jesus Christ and God was

[5] Cameron (1993), 56; Ehrman (2018), 32-38; Lenski (2016), 202; and Watts (2015), 43-46. Although Pickard (2021: 196-207) is skeptical on the authenticity of Constantine's conversion, he also discusses the increased support Constantine gave the Church.
[6] Cameron (1993), 61; Kirsch (2004), 190; and Leithart (2010), 120-122. Constantine had churches built throughout the empire: including in Antioch, Nicomedia, Rome, and Jerusalem (Jones 1978: 176-177).
[7] Van Dam (2007), 280.
[8] Van Dam (2007), 280. Constantine set a precedent for future emperors with his involvement in theological debates. All subsequent emperors, with the exception of Julian, would likewise concern themselves with matters of the Church (see Cameron 1993: 61).
[9] Van Dam (2007), 256-257. Constantine had initially tried to reconcile Arius and Alexander shortly after his defeat of Licinius.
[10] Potter (2013), 226-231.

definitively defined, and Arius' doctrines were condemned.[11] While the exact role Constantine played at the council is uncertain,[12] the fact that he was attempting to settle division and strife within the Church suggests his investment in the religion was genuine.

Despite Constantine's support of Christianity, he rarely actively suppressed the traditional 'pagan' religion. Temples were rarely closed, and he permitted that one, built in Italy, be dedicated to the imperial family towards the end of his reign.[13] He even held a gold statue of Fortuna in his hand on the day of Constantinople's dedication (324 CE).[14] While I believe he may have done this solely for superstitious rather than devotional religious reasons, he nevertheless held an appreciation for traditional 'pagan' art. Starting in 324 CE, he began to strip temples of their gold, silver, and art to decorate his new capital at Constantinople. Although their removal could have been a tactic to suppress the traditional Roman religions, the transfer – not destruction – of the art objects from 'pagan' temples to display them in Constantinople suggests that Constantine wanted these objects for their beauty.[15] Therefore, although Constantine did not necessarily promote traditional Roman religious belief, he certainly did not persecute it and, in some ways, even appreciated it.

In summary, Constantine clearly supported the Church with his actions, and although he did not actively persecute non-Christians, he succeeded in making the Church far more secure than what it had been a few decades before he reigned. As Eadie states, whatever one decides

[11] Van Dam (2007), 271.
[12] For example, see Barnes (1993: 169), who does not believe that Constantine was a voting member at the council of Nicaea, even though he may have taken part in the discussions. On the other hand, Armstrong (2014: 93) argues that Constantine was invested in the proceedings and played a significant role in the council, being the one who even suggested the term *homoousion*.
[13] Cameron (1993), 57.
[14] Kirsch (2004), 191.
[15] Lee (2006), 174-175. The removal of gold and silver from temples may have been for fiscal reasons in the same way that the gold from the chryselephantine statue of Athena could be removed in times of need (Thuc. 2.13.5). For more information, see Jones (1978: 174).

regarding Constantine's motives or the historicity of his conversion to Christianity, there can be no doubt that he established a tolerant environment in which Christian views could be disseminated with impunity.[16] It is within this milieu that we need to consider the development and dissemination of the 'Constantinian' monogram.

1.2 The 'Constantinian' Monogram as a Religious Symbol

As stated in the introduction to this dissertation, few scholars discuss in-depth the development of the 'Constantinian' monogram as a symbol in art in the fourth century. Those that do disagree sharply and usually fall into two broad categories: those – notably Black, Longenecker, and Sulzberger – that believe that the 'Constantinian' monogram, in particular the chi-rho, was exclusively a religious symbol and those – notably Bardill, Bruun, Garipzanov, and Pitt-Rivers – that believe it was an imperial, or Constantinian, symbol. In order to remain consistent and avoid confusion, I will generally refer to the symbol as a chi-rho throughout this chapter. However, it should be kept in mind that the form of the sign remains in question, and at the end of this chapter – and in subsequent chapters – the exact nature of the 'Constantinian' monogram will be explored more thoroughly. I will now turn to an examination of the dichotomy of thought found in the secondary sources.

1.2.1 Christian Symbolism

One way in which the ancient Roman viewer might have interpreted the chi-rho is as a Christian symbol. Certainly, there cannot be a complete divorce of the symbol from Christianity, as the Greek letters that compose the monogram are taken from the first two letters of Christ's name. In addition, the lasting effects of its Christian properties remain evident, as it is a symbol still used

[16] Eadie (1971), 8.

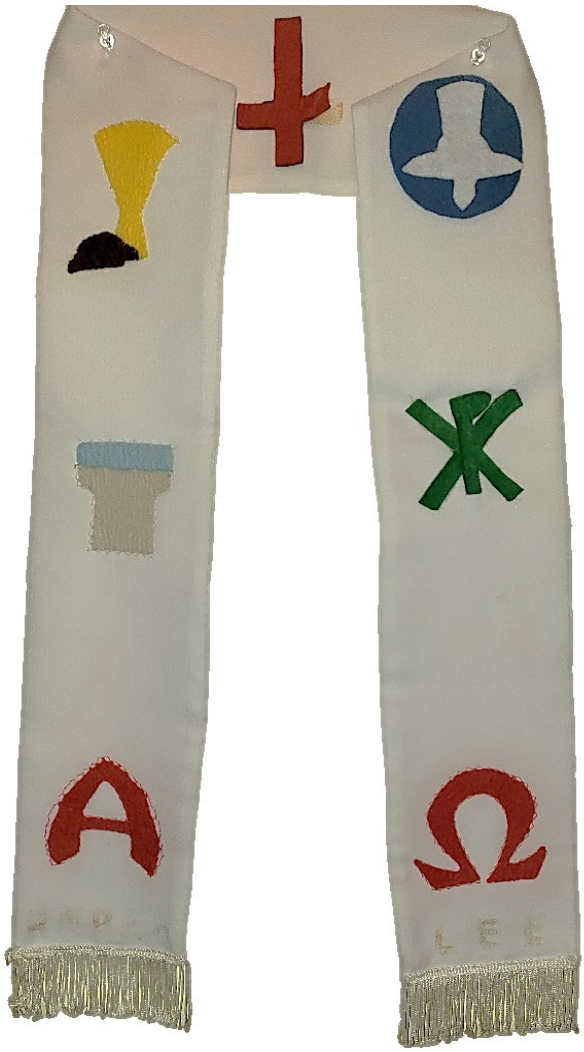

Figure 1.1 A baptismal stole with a chi-rho from St. Mark's Church (Aylmer, Quebec, Canada). November, 1983.
Photo taken by author in 2020.

by the Catholic Church today (see **Figure 1.1**).[17] Therefore, looking back at the development of the symbol in the fourth century after the conversion of Constantine is difficult because we are viewing it with the bias of 1600 years worth of imbued meaning. For this reason, the scholarship has tended to assign a Christian meaning to the symbol, sometimes without discussion of other possible interpretations.[18] There are, to be sure, several valid reasons for attributing Christian signification to the sign, which will now be discussed in more detail.

Several explanations have been put forward in the secondary scholarship for why the 'Constantinian' monogram should be considered a Christian symbol in the fourth century. The most frequently cited is the meaning attributed to it by the ancient sources. Both Lactantius and Eusebius refer to the symbol Constantine saw before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge as a sign from the Christian God.[19] For this reason, the prevalent opinion amongst the

[17] Drake (2000), 201; and Hurtado (2006), 135. It is still used on Church furniture, utensils, baptism stoles and clerical vestments.
[18] Alföldi (1948); 27; Barnes (1981), 43; Black (1970), 319-327; Brent (2009), 281; Finegan (1969), 234; Guarducci (1960a), 102; Lenski (2006), 71; Longenecker (2015), 3; Odahl (2010), 106; and Tomlin (2002) 27. Lenski does stipulate, however, that there is little material evidence of the chi-rho appearing as a common symbol of Constantine's conversion to Christianity before the 320s.
[19] For more information on the ancient sources, refer to Chapter 4.

scholarship has been that the chi-rho is a straightforward Christian symbol (refer back to Ch.1, fn. 18). Unfortunately, this is not restricted to early scholarship but is an assumption that still pervades the discipline of early Christian art – to say nothing of the study of the emperor Constantine – and remains strongly associated with the sign. In this way, scholars have emphasized its importance as a *Christian* symbol since that is how the ancient sources describe it. This emphasis, however, is problematic as it transposes the views of the authors of the literary sources, all of which were Christian, onto the material evidence.

A second reason put forward arguing that the chi-rho is a Christian symbol does factor the material evidence into consideration: its implementation in fourth-century Christian art. According to Toynbee, after Constantine adopted it as a symbol, it began to be used pervasively in Christian inscriptions and other Christian works of art.[20] Some of these objects are unquestionably Christian, as indicated by the presence of other Christian symbolism. One example is the common co-existence of the chi-rho and the Greek letters alpha and omega, particularly on Romano-British objects.[21] Notably, since these Greek letters are being used in a place far removed from Greece, where Greek was a seldom-used language, they can appear upside down and inverted.[22] These examples suggest that the precise form of the letters was not as important as the intended meaning behind them. The combination of the chi-rho with an alpha and omega also appears on the coins of the usurper Magnentius (350 – 353 CE), something I discuss in detail in Chapter 5.[23] When they occur together on an object, the use of the alpha and

[20] Toynbee (1964), 11.
[21] Bruun (1997), 52; Finegan (1969), 233; Petts (2003), 104; Thomas (1981) 89; and Toynbee (1964), 12-13. According to Toynbee, the symbol appears in three instances flanked by an alpha and omega behind the heads of saints, all of whom are named and thus securely identified. Finegan mentions a piece of pottery from Dura Europos that has the chi-rho flanked by a capitalized alpha, which has a pre-Constantinian date. For more on pre-Constantinian uses of the 'Constantinian' monogram, see Chapter 3. See also Chapter 7, which discusses several Romano-British silver hoards.
[22] Thomas (1981), 89.
[23] Bruun (1997), 43. According to Bruun, this may be the earliest reference to the bible found on coins.

omega often strengthens the Christian interpretation of the chi-rho. This inference is particularly reinforced by a passage from the book of Revelations, which states:

> ἐγὼ τὸ Ἄλφα καὶ τὸ Ὦ, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος.
>
> I am the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and end.
>
> *Revelations* 22.13

Considering this biblical passage, if a chi-rho were found on an object joined together with an alpha and omega, it would more securely imply an intended Christian signification.

A third indication that the chi-rho was intended to have Christian meaning was its removal from the imperial standards during the reign of the emperor Julian (360-361 CE).[24] Julian was the last 'pagan' emperor of the Roman Empire, ruling after the death of Constantine's son Constantius II, and the removal of the device from the imperial standard might indicate that the symbol held Christian signification, especially in the imperial court. Since Julian wished to return the empire to the traditional 'pagan' practices, removing the chi-rho from the imperial standard would be consistent with his motives. According to the emperor in his satirical essay the *Misopogon*,

> Τὸ Χῖ, φασίν, οὐδὲν ἠδίκησε τὴν πόλιν οὐδὲ τὸ Κάππα. τί μέν ἐστι τοῦτο τῆς ὑμετέρας σοφίας τὸ αἴνιγμα ξυνεῖναι χαλεπόν, τυχόντες δ᾽ἡμεῖς ἐξηγητῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ὑμετέρας πόλεως ἐδιδάχθημεν ἀρχὰς ὀνομάτων εἶναι τὰ γράμματα, δηλοῦν δ᾽ἐθέλειν τὸ μὲν Χριστόν, τὸ δὲ Κωνστάντιον.
>
> "The *Chi*," say the citizens, "never harmed the city in any way, nor did the *Kappa*." Now the meaning of this riddle which your wisdom has invented is hard to understand, but I obtained interpreters from your city and I was informed that these are the first letters of names, and that the former is intended to represent Christ, the latter Constantius.[25]
>
> Jul. *Mis.* 357a

[24] Kirsch (2004), 247; and Tomlin (2002), 27.
[25] Text and translation from W. C. Wright (1913).

As this passage indicates, Julian knew that the chi, at any rate, was a sign for the name of Christ and understood what this sign meant for the Christian citizens of Antioch. However, it should also be noted that almost all of Julian's family had been wiped out in the summer of 337 CE, shortly after Constantine's death, to ensure the seamless succession of Constantine's sons by removing those they deemed as threats.[26] Even if Julian had been a Christian himself, he might have removed the symbol from the imperial standard simply because of its association with Constantine and his sons. It is interesting to note that in the section quoted above, the citizens of Antioch, and later even Julian, create a link between the chi, which stands for Christ, and the kappa, which stands for Constantius. I discuss this association between the symbol and the imperial family in more detail below.

A final motivation scholars have for stressing the Christian meaning of the chi-rho is because it is such an important symbol for examining early Christian art, an area of study with a paucity of evidence.[27] According to Grabar,

> Iconographically, the invention is hardly remarkable; and we can only regret its lack of distinction. Yet here, for once, both written sources and archaeological evidence are exceptionally explicit on the religious significance of the Christian device adopted by Constantine.
>
> Grabar (1968), 39

With the lack of distinctly Christian art before the fourth century, it is not surprising that Grabar emphasizes the Christian significance of the symbol in order to determine a Christian presence in the material evidence. Nevertheless, he assumes that the chi-rho is explicitly – and exclusively – Christian. He is not the only author to have made this assumption. For example, the chi-rho is often taken as evidence of unambiguous Christian meaning when authors discuss specific

[26] Bruun (1997), 48.
[27] Grabar (1968), 39. As Grabar notes, the earliest Christian iconography belongs to the classification of allegorical image-signs (1968: 7-11).

categories of artefacts, such as coins.[28] However, as Cameron and Hall rightly point out, coins minted with the chi-rho are extremely scarce under Constantine.[29] It is, therefore, dangerous to make assumptions of Christian signification based on the presence of a chi-rho, and only a chi-rho, on objects.

Figure 1.2 A section of the mosaic from Frampton, Dorset (now lost). The apse features a *cantharus* in a panel. Below is a second panel which has chi-rho within a circle. The chi-rho is directly across from a mosaic with a bust of Neptune. 4th century CE.
Lysons (1808), Plate V. Image in public domain.

[28] See, for example, Alföldi (1932); and Alföldi (1948). Alföldi often refers to the chi-rho as the 'Christian monogram.' Odahl (2010: 248) believes that Christian officials used the chi-rho to garner favour from the emperor by replicating the symbol on coins from the mints they administered. However, rather than imposing a specifically Christian motivation, this could have been a way for mint officials to associate themselves with the imperial family. The use of the chi-rho and tau-rho on fourth-century coins will be thoroughly discussed in Chapter 5.

[29] Cameron & Hall (1999), 210. The first appearance of the chi-rho on the coins of Constantine happened only a few years after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. It is found on Constantine's helmet in an obverse portrait of the emperor on a special issue silver medallion from Ticinum, minted in 315 CE. (*RIC VII* Ticinium 36). A life-size version of the helmet has been found in the Netherlands. It is unlikely to have belonged to the emperor and probably dates instead to the end of the fourth or the fifth century (see Stephenson 2009: 173).

In summary, there are four principles reasons given for attributing a Christian meaning to the 'Constantinian' monogram: its description by the ancient, *Christian* sources; its implementation on fourth-century art; its removal from the imperial standard under the 'pagan' emperor Julian; and its importance for the study of early Christian art. However, as we will see throughout this dissertation, interpreting the chi-rho as a Christian device from the outset of a study is problematic, as it influences the interpretation of any other iconographic elements present in the object's design.

In the introduction to this dissertation, we have already seen an example of this problematic assumption with the mosaic from Hinton St Mary. Because of the chi-rho, the figure in the central roundel is presumed to be Christ and, therefore, all other iconography surrounding it is imbued with a Christian significance. Both the Hinton St Mary mosaic and the (now lost) mosaic from Frampton (Dorset, England) feature a chi-rho amongst classical 'pagan' scenes, including Bellerophon slaying the chimera, the four seasons (or winds), and – in the case of the Frampton mosaic – Neptune and Bacchus (see **Figure 1.2**). The decorative program at Lullingstone (Kent, England) also integrates a fresco with a chi-rho, surrounded by a wreath and flanked by an alpha and omega (see **Figure 1.3**). It also features several pagan-themed mosaics, such as Bellerophon and Europa. For all three of these sites, scholars have suggested that the scenes with Bellerophon represent a Christianocentric, specifically Gnostic, allegory of the triumph of good over evil.[30] Assuming that the owners of the villas were Christian because of the presence of the chi-rhos means, at the very least, that they had a syncretic view of religion,[31]

[30] Most recently, see Rees (2020: 6-7, and 22). See also Doig (2008), 49; Huskinson (1974), 77 and 83; Painter (1971), 164; and Toynbee (1964), 14. For the specifically Gnostic interpretation of the sites, see Perring's article *'Gnosticism' in Fourth-Century Britain: The Frampton Mosaics Reconsidered* (2003). However, there is evidence at Lullingstone to suggest that the mosaics with 'pagan' motifs were in place a few decades earlier than the frescoes, which makes attributing any meaning from the frescoes to the mosaics problematic (Perring 2003: 117).
[31] For more information on syncretism, see Elsner (1998), 211-221.

combining both 'pagan' and Christian elements in their decorative schemes.[32] Another example of a 'Constantinian' monogram giving new meaning to the iconography that surrounds it comes from the graffiti on Wall G from the tomb of St Peter under St Peter's basilica in Rome. Guarducci states that the chi-rho amongst the graffiti "enrich[es] the epigraph with new mystical values."[33] While the addition of the monogram should be considered with the rest of the graffiti, especially given the Christian nature of the tomb, it should not necessarily influence or superimpose meaning on the overall picture presented by the rest of the epigraphy.

Figure 1.3 A section of the wall painting from Lullingstone, Kent. A chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and an omega, appears within a wreath. 4th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1967,0407.1.a).

[32] Thomas (1981), 106. According to Thomas, the owner of the Hinton St Mary mosaic may have also embraced Christianity for political reasons, either to impress or to conform to the imperial family.
[33] Guarducci (1960a), 102. The graffiti is very similar to that found at the *domus Faustae*, which features both a chi-rho and tau-rho. For more information on the chi-rho in inscriptions, and the graffiti at the *domus Faustae*, see Chapter 6.

A second problem, which arises with the assumption that the chi-rho is solely a Christian symbol, is the use of the symbol for dating objects. The symbol has been called the 'Constantinian symbol' by several authors, not only to indicate its link to the vision of Constantine but also to imply its early-to-mid fourth-century date.[34] For example, while discussing Wall G from the tomb of St Peter, Snyder concludes that the wall dates to the fourth century based on the presence of a chi-rho. Subsequently, the use of the chi-rho points to a Constantinian date for the whole wall.[35] Snyder's analysis does not present his readers with the whole picture despite this indicator. The site's excavator, Guarducci, notwithstanding the chi-rho found amidst the graffiti, dates the wall between 290 and 315 CE. She reaches this conclusion because of a monument that Constantine built in 315 CE that obstructs a portion of the wall.[36] Although there is some overlap with the range of dates given by Snyder, Guarducci's altered dates are compelling as they suggest an early use of the symbol, with it having been inscribed on the wall shortly after Constantine's defeat of Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. The date is especially crucial because some of the graffiti may even refer to the battle itself. The expression *hoc vince*, which mirrors the words used by Eusebius to describe Constantine's vision, appears on the wall together with the chi-rho.[37] Thus we would seem to have a very early reference to the Battle of the Milvian Bridge and a direct connection with the symbol Constantine saw in his vision.

As we have seen, there are some compelling reasons for attaching Christian meaning to the chi-rho, not the least of which is the fact that the monogram stands for the name of Christ, a

[34] Bruun (1997), 53; Finegan (1969), 234; Marucchi (1935), 201; Pearce (2008), 196; Petts (2003), 115; Snyder (1985), 27; and Thomas (1981), 86-7. Marucchi states that although the monogram existed before Constantine, after he adopted the symbol it began to appear in various different forms. See *The Form of the 'Constantinian' Monogram* section below.
[35] Snyder (1985), 147.
[36] Guarducci (1960a), 112.
[37] Guarducci (1960a), 125.

topic discussed in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4. Despite these reasons, other potential meanings for the symbol should not be ignored. It is one of these alternate meanings, also imbued with religious significance, to which we will now turn.

1.2.2 Sol and Solar Haloes

In light of the controversy surrounding the validity of Constantine's vision, the credibility of which most twenty-first-century scholars find hard to believe, Peter Weiss argues that Constantine was not inventing a miracle but had actually witnessed a solar phenomenon in 310 CE that resulted in a genuine religious epiphany.[38] 310 CE is significant because a panegyric from that date tells of Constantine receiving divine aid from the god Apollo.[39] Since Christians at the time would have recognized solar imagery, Constantine's various visions could, in fact, be read as one.[40] In this way, Weiss links together the different versions – those found in the panegyric of 310, Lactantius and Eusebius – into one cohesive account of a singular religious experience as recorded by different sources. According to Barnes, Weiss' hypothesis of the solar halo and the subsequent evolution of the explanation of the celestial phenomenon by fourth-century authors tie all the evidence together in a way that no earlier hypotheses have ever done.[41] While it is interesting to contemplate the various accounts as one cohesive narrative, the theory still overly emphasizes the literary sources and does not pay enough attention to the material evidence.

---

[38] Weiss (2003), 245-254. Peter Weiss believes that Constantine saw a solar halo, also called a sundog, in the sky. I address this topic and the *Panegyric of 310 CE* further in Chapter 4.
[39] Lenski (2006), 67. The vision of 310 CE has also been linked to Sol Invictus (see Henig 2001: 32; and Brent 2009: 281). Leithart believes that Constantine devoted himself to Sol in 310 CE after his vision and subsequently reinterpreted the vision in 312 CE when he had a dream in which Christ appeared (Leithart 2010: 78). Thus the three conflicting accounts can be merged into one cohesive narrative.
[40] Alföldi (1948), 57; and Long (2009), 232. According to Alföldi, the Church had often compared Christ with the Sun, calling him 'Sun of Truth,' 'Sun of Resurrection,' and 'Sun of Salvation.'
[41] Barnes (2014), 75-80.

Despite the stress on the literary evidence, Weiss examines some material evidence to support his solar phenomenon conclusion. For instance, he believes that Constantine's coins reflect his interpretation and that an issue featuring Sol standing amongst a radiate cross confirms this new reading of Constantine's vision (see **Figure 1.4**).[42] However, it is difficult to determine what the iconography on these coins actually represents. The 'radiate cross' looks like a series of 'X's, and the editor of Volume VII of the *Roman Imperial Coinage (RIC)* describes it as the plan of a Roman camp.[43] Another difficulty with this hypothesis is that the coin type that Weiss is describing was issued in 319 CE. This late date is problematic, as Constantine's mints had already begun by that time – albeit rarely – to produce some coins featuring the chi-rho. If Constantine had already changed his story of the vision of 310 CE to reflect his new Christian protector, why would his mints issue a series of coins in 319 CE featuring the original *'pagan'* version of the vision? It is possible, of course, that Constantine had another motivation, such as a need to cater to both 'pagans' and Christians, but as it stands, Weiss' argument does not hold up under closer scrutiny.

Figure 1.4 *Nummus* of Constantine I minted in Thessalonica (*RIC VII* Thessalonica 66). The reverse features Sol standing atop a 'radiate cross.' 319 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. B.3915).

[42] Weiss (2003), 251. Weiss also believes that Constantine's personal correspondence is permeated with metaphors of 'Light.' For the coin, see *RIC VII* Thessalonica 69-71.
[43] As Vagi (1999: 540) states, the interpretation of the iconography on this coin is far from certain.

In addition to his argument, Weiss believes the symbolism of a radiate Sol developed in the fourth century into the chi-rho.[44] Drake, too, argues that the chi-rho would have been an acceptable symbol for the worship of both Sol and Christ, and thus it reflects the unity of Constantine's visual program.[45] Sol, with the exception of personifications of Victory and the like, is the last of the 'pagan' deities to survive on the coins of Constantine I. Nevertheless, he too gradually disappears as a numismatic motif.[46] As we shall see in Chapter 5, there is nothing to suggest from the coins that the image of Sol was being replaced directly with the chi-rho; whatever iconography was taking the place of the 'pagan' deities on the coins of Constantine after his conversion was definitively not Christian.

As the above analysis has shown, there are several problems with Weiss' argument, which still fundamentally calls the chi-rho a Christian monogram. Despite his earlier support of the theory, Drake also believes that Weiss' argument takes too much for granted. According to Drake, Weiss is simply moving the date of Constantine's vision to 310 CE and putting too much emphasis on the solar phenomenon.[47] Weiss also overly stresses the literary sources, which are not supported by the material evidence. Nevertheless, what can be taken away from Weiss' analysis is the idea that Constantine employed his divine visions for his own purposes. Instead of conflating the primary sources into a single vision, we might consider the visions as successive stages of development in the emperor's policies. Regardless of Constantine's motives, we are left

[44] Weiss (2003), 252. Lewis' 2003 article "The Origin of the Chi-Rho Monogram as a Christian Symbol" also argues that the chi-rho derived from the sunwheel of Sol Invinctus Mithras.
[45] Drake (1976), 74. For more information on the association of Christ with Sol, see also Pearce (2008), 214; and Stephenson (2009), 84-5. Lewis (2003: 26) believes that some Christians would have syncretized Sol as an aspect of Christ.
[46] See *RIC VII*. The last mint to issue images with Sol is Sirmium from 322-323 CE. See also Stephenson (2009), 173.
[47] Drake (2009), 219-220.

with the visions serving the different agendas of each author who documented them.[48] Whether the visions actually took place or not, the way in which the various authors interpreted them speaks volumes about the intentions of Constantine and the imperial court.

1.3 THE 'CONSTANTINIAN' MONOGRAM AS AN IMPERIAL SYMBOL

The preceding section discussed the Christian interpretation of the chi-rho. The following section will explore the second major theory about the symbol's meaning: its dynastic signification.

1.3.1 Monogram of the House of Constantine

Although the chi-rho is often called the 'Constantinian' monogram, indicating its connection to that imperial family, it is rarely divorced from its Christian significance; and this is even though the symbol itself existed before the advent of Christianity (see Chapter 3). A few authors have tried to address the development of the symbol before it became strongly associated with the Church. One emphasis has been the connection between the monogram and the house of Constantine.[49] For instance, Drake supposes that the importance of the symbol originally lay with its connection to the imperial family and not with Christ. Bruun and Pearce, who emphasize the connection between the symbol and the Constantinian family, support this hypothesis.[50] As we will see in Chapter 7, Pearce uses the association between the symbol and the emperor as an

[48] Long (2009), 235. Long believes that Lactantius used the sacred sign as a way of shedding the oppression of the persecutors, while Eusebius was setting up a dynastic symbol. This proposition is enticing and will be explored further below in *The Form of the 'Constantinian' Monogram* section.

[49] Bruun (1997), 42; Drake (1976), 72; Jensen (2000b), 149; and Pearce (2008), 201-207. According to Jensen, the symbol was an emblem of the imperial family. Even earlier, Drake stated that the chi-rho referenced Christ to no one but Christians.

[50] Pearce (2008: 207) states that the usurper Magnentius used the symbol deliberately to connect himself with the imperial family of Constantine. Grigg (1977: 17-19) states that the sign's connection with military imagery and the imperial family attests to its protective properties. Although he argues for Christian symbolism, his statement shows he is thinking of how the device is used in the material evidence. In my opinion, he does not move enough away from the 'prophylactic power' of the sign to consider other motivations the emperor might have had for its deployment across the empire.

argument supporting her identification of the figure in the Hinton St Mary mosaic roundel with Constantine or another member of his family.

One argument supporting the theory of the chi-rho's dynastic signification is that it was not a symbol familiar to the general public in the fourth century.[51] Therefore, Constantine's adoption of the symbol may have indicated a close connection with the divine will of Christ, but it also embodied him and his family. The average Roman might not have recognized the symbol's religious undertones but, because of the spread of imperial coinage, would have semiotically associated the chi-rho with Constantine and, later on, his sons. In fact, in the *Vita Constantini* (2.30-32), Eusebius says that the symbol appeared on the *labarum* (see below) in conjunction with a picture of Constantine and his sons. This iconography would have been a very direct visual link between the symbol and the imperial family. It was not just Christ that the symbol announced to the ancient Roman, but it was *Constantine* with the divine support of Christ.

The association of the house of Constantine with the chi-rho is similar to the visual program developed centuries earlier, under the emperor Augustus.[52] For example, the emperor adopted Capricorn as a sign of his reign. The astrological sign came to hold a range of meanings and functioned as a type of logo for the rule of Augustus.[53] In addition, during the Augustan regime, the emperor's ancestry became an important feature in art; in particular, Augustus' divine ancestry was stressed. On several famous objects – the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, the *Gemma*

[51] Fox (1986), 616.
[52] See Zanker's *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (1990). Zanker argues that Augustus did not so much implement an intentional propagandistic campaign; instead, there was a gradual development of a visual program (see, for instance, page 101).
[53] According to Barton (1995: 47), Capricorn was a polyvalent symbol that gradually came to hold multiple meanings, built up over time. Once it had been established under Augustus, it was then appropriated by other emperors as a way of connecting their reigns to that of Augustus and legitimatizing their rule. For more on Capricorn under Augustus, see A. M. Lewis' "Augustus and his Horoscope Reconsidered".

Augustae, the Augustus of Prima Porta, and the statuary program in the temple of *Mars Ultor* in the Augustan Forum – the emperor's connection to the gods was emphasized. Indeed, even before him, his adoptive father, Julius Caesar, had used divine ancestry as a legitimizing technique.[54] By linking his ancestry to the founders of Rome (Aeneas, Romulus, and Remus) and the gods (Venus and Mars), Augustus was able to give sanctity to his reign and his right to be emperor. Similarly, Constantine emphasized his legitimization to rule by associating himself with Christ and being a beneficiary of the divine protection of the Christian God. The chi-rho, then, was a part of the visual program used to propagate this connection. Like the use of Capricorn under Augustus, the chi-rho, as we will see in Chapter 7, accumulated symbolic meaning as Constantine's reign progressed.

1.3.2 A New Imperial Standard: The *Labarum*

A connected – but slightly separate – theory maintains that the chi-rho was a military symbol, rather than a specific dynastic symbol, used to underscore the emperor's victory in battle. After all, the chi-rho was initially a symbol of victory for the emperor Constantine, regardless of his personal religious beliefs.[55] In both Eusebius and Lactantius, it is before a decisive battle that Constantine receives his vision, and it is by using the symbol given to him by God that he prevails over his enemy. Given how it was first employed, it is unsurprising that the symbol is frequently found in fourth-century art in military

Figure 1.5 The *labarum* as described by Eusebius.
Westrin (1911), 1088. Image in public domain.

[54] Davies (2004), 73.
[55] Bruun (1966), 61-2.

contexts (see Chapters 5 and 7).[56] The incorporation of the chi-rho on the *vexillum* (or military standard with a pennant or flag) is common enough that it has been given its own name: the *labarum* (see **Figure 1.5**).

The etymology and meaning of the word *labarum* in its original language is still unknown,[57] although it now seems likely that it may have originated with the Celts. According to Hatt, the term *labarum* may have originated with the Celtic garrison, possibly influenced by the cross of St Andrew, both of which Hatt believes were known by Constantine.[58] Indeed, Constantine's army was primarily made up of men of Gallic and Germanic descent, and this could explain the origins of the *labarum*, which came to replace the 'pagan' standard.[59] Despite its frequent use in art, the word *labarum* is only directly mentioned by one ancient source, Prudentius (348 – 405 CE).[60] In his reply to the address given by Symmachus (*Contra Orationem Symmachi*), Prudentius states,

> *testis Christicolae ducis adventantis ad urbem Mulvius exceptum Tiberina in stagna tyrannum praecipitans, quanam victricia viderit arma maiestate regi, quod signum dextera vindex praetulerit, quali radiarint stemmate pila. Christus purpureum gemmanti textus in auro signabat* ***labarum****, clipeorum insignia Christus scripserat, ardebat summis crux addita cristis.*
>
> The Milvian [Bridge] is a witness of the Christ-loving emperor advancing on the city, hurling as it did the deposed tyrant into the Tiber, where it saw what power ruled the victorious arms, saw what the conquering hand carried before it, and saw the wreaths with which the javelins shone. Christ was woven into the jewelled gold,

[56] Jensen (2000b), 149; and Tomlin (2002), 26.
[57] Weiss (2003: 254) says the word is neither Latin nor Greek. However, according to the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, the word may have originated as an alteration of the Greek *'labraton,'* a type of standard with a laurel-leaf. Cook (1908: 192) suggests the word comes from the Greek 'labrys' for double-bitted axe. Cook's theory is outdated, however, and not used in modern sources. Even Cook himself admits that his hypothesis be suspended pending further evidence.
[58] Hatt (1950), 436. Black (1970: 319) seemed unaware of Hatt's conclusions and believed that the word's origins were still unknown in the 1970s.
[59] Barnes (1981), 43; and Forsythe (2012), 150.
[60] In Lewis and Short's Latin Dictionary, the authors source Prudentius and Tertullian. However, the word *labarum* is never directly mentioned by Tertullian (*Apol.* 16.7), rather he only hints at the object itself.

> marking out the purple ***labarum,*** Christ had written on the crests of shields, and a cross flashed like a fire, added to the tops of standards.[61]
>
> Prudent. *C. Symm*. 486-7

The events about which Prudentius is writing occurred nearly a century before his account.[62] Therefore, although the new standard may have been introduced under Constantine, its verbiage would not have existed immediately. Additionally, the word –originating from neither Greek nor Latin – would have made no sense to the average Roman.[63] This obscurity provides us with an indication of the initial reception of not only the term *labarum* but also the physical object and the chi-rho symbol found upon it. Although only those close to the emperor would have understood the signification of the sign and standard initially, the linguistic origins of the word may provide evidence of when Constantine first began to use the object. Barnes contends that if the term *labarum* had Celtic origins, it would indicate that Constantine encountered it before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, possibly through his Gallic and Germanic soldiers while he was still in Britain and Gaul.[64] If this was indeed the case, it suggests that Constantine took the term introduced to him by his army and applied it to his new standard. Should the theory of the Celtic origins of the term *labarum* be correct, it might also indicate that Constantine was considering creating a new imperial standard before the battle of 312 CE.

While the chi-rho itself has never been the subject devoted to an entire monograph, the *labarum* has. In his book titled *The Riddle of the Labarum and the Origin of Christian Symbols* (1966), Pitt-Rivers argues that the *labarum* was not a Christian symbol. He goes so far as to suggest that the Roman viewer would not have understood any possible Christian meaning.[65]

[61] Text and translation taken from Hartman (2016).
[62] Barnes (1976: 377-378) concludes that Prudentius published the work in 402 CE.
[63] Weiss (2003), 254.
[64] Barnes (2014), 78.
[65] Pitt-Rivers (1966), 30-37.

However, although still provocative, Pitt-Rivers' work does not stand up to scrutiny as he lacks supporting evidence and bases much of his argument on questionable assumptions, such as the interchangeability of different types of symbols, like the eight-sided star and the chi-rho. Furthermore, Pitt-Rivers does not explore the military aspects of the sign, preferring instead to discuss the pre-Constantinian uses of the chi-rho. While valid, this examination of the early uses of the symbol does nothing to support his discussion of the *labarum*, which was clearly invented under Constantine, even though the precise dating of the new *vexillum* is problematic.

Others have considered the military significance of the *labarum*. For example, Grabar states that the *labarum* was a religious talisman that protected the army, which in turn protected the Roman people.[66] Despite the talisman's significance for the military, its date of creation remains as questionable as its linguistic origins; and the background in which it was created is certainly not without complications. According to Eusebius, shortly after his vision and subsequent consultation with priests, Constantine had the *labarum* fashioned from gold and jewels (*VC* 2.30-32). The *labarum*, however, could have only been created many years after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge since, as Drake rightly points out, it bears the portraits of Constantine's sons, who were not even born at the time the battle took place.[67] Furthermore, the *labarum* does not appear on the coins of Constantine until 327 CE, when it is first issued from Constantinople (see **Figure 1.6**).[68] Finally, Stephenson argues that the *labarum* was explicitly

[66] Grabar (1968), 39. He does believe that it was a Christian object. Hatt (1950: 435) argues that it was only later that the *labarum* became Christianized. It certainly began to be featured more frequently on the coins of later Christian emperors and continued under the reign of Valentinian into the reign of Theodosius II. For more information, see Bruun (1997: 55).
[67] Drake (2000), 202. Del Pozo (2020: 46) states that the *labarum* was the apotropaic personal banner of the emperor that received honours and oaths. In this way, I believe the *labarum* would have been a focal point for the cult of the emperor. Except here, it is under the authority of the Christian God.
[68] *RIC VII* Constantinople 26. However, the image does correspond to the depiction of the *labarum* by Eusebius (Stephenson 2009: 185).

Figure 1.6 *Nummus* of Constantine I minted in Constantinople (*RIC VII* Thessalonica 19). The reverse features a *labarum* piercing a serpent. 327 CE. © The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1890,0804.11).

made for the imperial bodyguard, something Eusebius does not mention in his account.[69] Considering all of these points, it would seem that Eusebius is describing an object created a significant time after Constantine's battle with Maxentius. It would not have been an object that those outside the imperial court would have been familiar with, especially since the visual motif would have only been accessible on coins issued several years after Constantine defeated Licinius and became the sole emperor. When it was minted on coins, its accompaniment with other military symbolism might indicate that the average Roman viewer would have taken the symbol to signify military victory: particular, the victory of the emperor Constantine and his family. Those who did recognize the chi-rho on the *labarum* as a sign for Christ might have altered their interpretation slightly by perceiving the *labarum* as a sign of Christian military victory under the rule of a Christian emperor.

1.4 A MULTIVALENT SYMBOL

The disparity amongst the secondary sources as to whether or not the chi-rho was considered a Christian symbol by the Roman viewer is not as distinct as the previous discussion would suggest. Several scholars, especially those writing on the subject in more recent years, consider the likelihood of the multivalent meaning of the 'Constantinian' monogram.[70] Even earlier than

[69] Stephenson (2009), 186.
[70] See Bruun (1962), 23; Drake (1976), 73; Drake (2000), 204; Fox (1986), 616; Frakes (2006), 104; Garipzanov (2018), 64-70; and Pearce (2008): 206.

this more contemporary scholarship, questions were raised about the meaning behind the symbol and multiple interpretations of the sign were examined. For example, Bruun, writing about the Christian signs minted on Constantinian coinage, speculates that as the chi-rho was initially deployed as a sign on imperial coins across the empire, its meaning was unclear to those viewing it. It was only eventually – as it became more ingrained year after year with the Christian religion – that it became strongly associated with Christianity, even if this was not the original intent behind the sign.[71] Bruun, however, is not explicit about whether or not the ambiguity of the symbol was intentional.

Others have argued that Constantine intentionally promoted the multivalent meanings of the symbol. For instance, if Constantine wished to appeal to both 'pagans' and Christians living in the empire, then the chi-rho was set up as an ideal symbol that each viewer could perceive differently.[72] It may have been Constantine's objective for the sign to hold more than one meaning: a symbol that was acceptable, but not exclusive, to Christians.[73] By appealing to a broader audience, which included anyone who would have seen the symbol on the emperor's coins, with his abstract symbolic imagery, Constantine could ingratiate himself to more of the Roman populace – regardless of their religion – and, therefore, he stood less chance of offending anyone. This statement, of course, should be considered cautiously, as we cannot be sure how many of those viewing the imagery would have been aware of the meaning behind these types of signs. Furthermore, although speculating on Constantine's intentional manipulation of the symbol is interesting, an entirely undefined symbol (as suggested by Bruun) would not have been a productive use of the imagery for an emperor trying to promote his divine legitimacy. It is

[71] Bruun (1962), 23.
[72] Frakes (2006), 104. According to Frakes, Constantine was vague about the symbol's meaning on purpose. For more on the use of chi-rho before the fourth century, see Chapter 3.
[73] Drake (1976), 73; and Drake (2000), 204. See also Fox (1986), 616.

perhaps safer to say that, regardless of Constantine's intention, the chi-rho gradually came to assume layers of meaning as time progressed.

Although the above ideas surrounding the imperial signification of the chi-rho have been mentioned now and again in the literature on Constantine, most scholars have continued to focus on the sign's religious aspects. Even when authors do mention the military and imperial application of the chi-rho, the fact that it is a Christian symbol is still stressed above any other meanings.[74] For example, according to Elliot, even though Constantine's propaganda was neutral in its tone, the emperor was himself still dedicated to Christianity.[75] I believe, however, that Elliot should reverse the emphasis of his statement. It is the neutrality of the language of the symbol that should be stressed, rather than the emperor's personal beliefs. The symbol's initial religious neutrality would have made it appealing to as many of the empire's citizens as possible. According to Pearce, even if Constantine genuinely believed he had received a divine sign from God, his use of the chi-rho was a masterful piece of 'religio-political propaganda' that continued to be used for centuries after his death.[76] Therefore, the chi-rho was a multivalent symbol that could signify different meanings – or even simultaneously signify several meanings – depending on the context and the viewer.

One more discussion is found in the secondary sources on the 'Constantinian' monogram to which I will now turn. This topic highlights the complexities of the scholarship on the 'Constantinian' monogram, which is problematic not only because of its potential multivalent meanings but also because the form of the symbol itself is unclear.

[74] See, for instance, Grabar (1968), 39; and Jones (1978), 83. Jones calls the symbol new and an invention of Constantine. However he also stresses it was a symbol that could be used as a monogram for Christ.
[75] Elliott (1990), 353.
[76] Pearce (2008), 206.

1.5 THE FORM OF THE 'CONSTANTINIAN' MONOGRAM

What was the symbol that Constantine was instructed in a dream to put on the shields of his soldiers? According to Lactantius' description (*De Mort. Pers.* 44), it resembled a cross with a curved top (a tau-rho); while Eusebius (*Vit. Const.* 2.28-32) calls it a monogram composed of the first two letters of Christ's name, in other words, a chi-rho.[77] Some scholars do not even mention the discrepancies in the literary sources and simply call the sign a chi-rho.[78] Others who do discuss the tau-rho in relation to the chi-rho find no differences between the two symbols.[79] These sources, either those that make no mention of the controversy surrounding the sign in Constantine's vision or those that dismiss the problem claiming there is no distinction between the signs, are problematic. Making the matter even more challenging, Barnes calls the debate surrounding exactly which sign the emperor put on his shields after his vision a minor problem.[80] I would argue, however, that it is not a minor problem, as a different reading of the text could change our understanding of the 'Constantinian' monogram and its uses in art. This issue, therefore, needs to be addressed in any discussion surrounding the symbol. Any differences between the pre-Constantinian use of the tau-rho and the chi-rho might impact how the symbols

[77] For a more in-depth discussion of the primary sources, see Chapter 4.
[78] See, for instance, Alföldi (1948), 18; Drake (2000), 201; Finegan (1969), 234; Gould (2007), 127; Grabar (1968), 39; Hatt (1950), 435; James (2012), 64-68; Longenecker (2015), 3; and Odahl (2010), 106. This lack of analysis of the different symbols is problematic. Odahl, while discussing the coins of Constantine, even mentions that the tau-rho symbol appeared on the coins of 336-337 CE; but he nevertheless does not discuss the symbol in any depth, except to call it a cross monogram.
[79] Barnes (2014), 79; Bruun (1997), 43; Coleman (1968), 78; Drake (1976), 72; Green (2010a), 225; Grigg (1977), 21; Leithart (2010), 71; Lenski (2006), 71; Thomas (1981), 88; and Van Dam (2011), 117. Grigg (1977:18) does not find the arguments challenging the identity of the sign seen by Constantine convincing. Van Dam (2011: 117) mentions that the language used by Lactantius in describing the symbol is odd. Thomas (1981:88), discussing the iconography in Britain, calls the tau-rho a simplified and later version of the chi-rho. This conclusion is impossible, as evidence for the *Christian* use of the tau-rho pre-dates the fourth century. For further information, see Chapter 3.
[80] Barnes, (2014), 79. In an earlier work, Barnes (1973: 39-40) had stated that an idea of Constantine's vision had already been formed based on the text of Eusebius when the manuscript of Lactantius was found. Although he was not explicitly discussing the tau-rho/chi-rho controversy, this does have implications for why the account given by Eusebius is more heavily weighted in modern scholarship.

were viewed in the fourth century and their intended use by Constantine. Ignoring the discrepancies found in the literary sources is a problem that continues to be present in contemporary Constantinian literature (refer to Ch.1, fns. 77 and 78). Even when both signs are discussed in the literature, an additional difficulty arises when trying to date when the symbols began to be used in art.

In 1925, Sulzberger studied the various Christian monograms that were in use in the fourth century and found three monograms of Christ deployed in art at the time: the iota-chi, the chi-rho, and the tau-rho.[81] Because he traced the use of the tau-rho to the middle of the fourth century, and not any earlier, he concluded that the sign mentioned by Lactantius could not be a tau-rho. This supposition, however, has now been successfully refuted. Hurtado, who has studied the tau-rho extensively, has contended that, despite what Sulzberger claimed, the tau-rho is the earliest of these so-called christograms to appear in art, occurring in securely Christian contexts as early as ca. 200 CE.[82] If this is indeed the case, it could explain why it is the symbol that Lactantius references. It would have been easier for him to equate the saving sign of Christ with a symbol that had already been in use in Christian contexts for a couple of centuries, as opposed to the chi-rho, which, as we shall see in later chapters, was less known in Christian milieus at the time of his writing.

In his book titled *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age* (2012), Bardill devotes an entire chapter to the chi-rho and what symbol the literary sources claim

[81] Sulzberger (1925), 366-448. He believes that the three monograms emerged chronologically, each after the other. He considers the iota-chi, formed like a six-sided star, to be the only symbol in use before the age of Constantine. Since it is formed like a star, however, it is difficult to determine if Christian symbolism was meant or not when it is found in art, especially as a star also often appears in 'pagan' imagery at the time. Next came the chi-rho, developed under Constantine at the beginning of the fourth century. Finally, the tau-rho began to appear after the middle of the fourth century. In fact, Sulzberger states that before the time of Constantine, Christian inscriptions do not usually have any of these symbols. According to Hurtado (2006: 145), it is *only* the iota-chi that may not have been used in pre-Constantinian contexts, thus completely reversing Sulzberger's findings. For more information, see Chapter 3.
[82] Hurtado (2006), 136; and Hurtado (2017), 25. For more information, see Chapter 3.

Constantine saw in his vision before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. In his discussion of the 'Constantinian' monogram, Bardill raises some interesting points, such as evidence for the use of the tau-rho before the fourth century. He thus concludes that it is plausible that the sign Lactantius was describing was indeed supposed to be a tau-rho and not a chi-rho.[83] Before Bardill's thorough analysis, several scholars had already reached a similar conclusion.[84] For example, Black, in his article titled "The chi-rho sign – christogram and/or tau-rho?" (1970), states that the 'Constantinian' monogram was originally a tau-rho, which was transformed over time into a chi-rho.[85] Black, however, does not consider that Lactantius and Eusebius could be describing two different symbols; and that one symbol did not transform into the other, but that both existed simultaneously. Cameron and Hall argue for precisely this scenario and say that the two accounts should not be conflated into one.[86] Lactantius and Eusebius, whether or not they were in consultation with Constantine, may have had specific reasons for describing the signs that they did. According to Long, Lactantius may have wanted to use a Christian sign that would stand up to the oppression of the persecutors, while Eusebius was more interested in describing a dynastic emblem.[87] It should also be noted that the ancient authors were writing decades apart from each other, which might have also impacted which symbol they described. Therefore, although Bardill and others present some valid arguments on the chi-rho and the tau-rho, their

[83] Bardill (2012: 164) also finds evidence for the use of the tau-rho from the time of Constantine in an aristocratic and Christian context. The symbol is found on a fresco from the House of Fausta connected with the words IN SIGNO [H]OC EST PATRIS VICTORIA and next to an inscription dated to the reign of the emperor Licinius' fourth consulship in 315 CE, attesting to the early use of the symbol. For more information, see also Scrinari (1991: 163-166).
[84] Drake (2000), 202; Pohlsander (2004), 23-24; and Stephenson (2009), 135. Pohlsander considers Lactantius' account the more reliable, as it is earlier and less biased than Eusebius' version. Drake seems to have amended his opinion of 1976 (refer back to Ch. 1, fn. 79) and wonders whether Lactantius might actually be describing a tau-rho.
[85] Black (1970), 327.
[86] Cameron & Hall (1999), 209. Earlier in their book, they call the sign Lactantius describes a tau-rho (see page 207), but later say that the sign seems to be some form of chi-rho (see page 209). This inconsistency is confusing as their position on the topic is that the two accounts should not be conflated into one.
[87] Long (2009), 235.

focus is primarily on correcting the inconsistencies found among the ancient literary sources. Their emphasis on the literature creates a detrimental gap in the scholarship by not paying enough attention – and, sometimes, by being neglectful – to the material evidence.

In a more recent publication, *Graphic Signs of Authority in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, 300-900* (2018), Garipzanov attempts to contradict Bardill's theory about the early origins of the tau-rho. He states that much of Bardill's evidence cannot be firmly dated and refutes the notion that Lactantius was describing a tau-rho in his text. He further believes that the chi-rho was a Christian symbol before the time of Constantine and that it was Lactantius' text itself that was instrumental in solidifying the chi-rho as a Christian-Imperial symbol. He suggests that Lactantius, who tutored Constantine's son Crispus at the imperial residence in Trier, through his *De Mortibus Persecutorum* (On the Deaths of the Persecutors) influenced the mint authorities to issue some bronze coins with a chi-rho engraved on the shield held by Crispus (circa 322-323 CE).[88] However, Garipzanov's analysis is faulty. Firstly, he uses spuriously dated artefacts, in this case, gems purportedly from the third century, to prove the pre-Constantinian Christian uses of the chi-rho. Secondly, his attribution of the spread of the chi-rho through Lactantius' text ignores the earliest depiction of the symbol on a coin (Constantine's silver medallion from Ticinum, dated to 315 CE).

Finally, some authors have said that the 'Constantinian' monogram was neither the chi-rho nor the tau-rho. Bardill attempts to prove that Constantine's symbol – as described by Lactantius – was really the *crux ansata*, a symbol of the sun and similar in design to the Egyptian ankh.[89] Finegan has even suggested that the tau-rho derived from the Egyptian ankh because of

[88] Garipzanov (2018), 29-30 and 50-57.
[89] Bardill (2012), 166.

their stylistic resemblance, a topic that I will explore further in Chapter 3.[90] However, Hurtado disagrees with the ankh hypothesis because the use of the ankh in a secure Christian context begins much later than the attested use of the tau-rho.[91] Regardless of these disagreements over the origins of the chi-rho and tau-rho, the vital point to take away from the aforementioned discussion is that there is a likely difference between tau-rho and the chi-rho and what they signified to the ancient viewer, which is an issue that should not be ignored.

1.6 Concluding Observations

The focus of this chapter has been to highlight the historiography surrounding the 'Constantinian' monogram and has demonstrated the significant areas of contention faced by scholars who study the symbol and its use in the fourth century. I have established that these issues are far from being resolved, and the academic community has yet to reach a consensus on the meaning of the 'Constantinian' monogram, let alone which symbol Constantine used as a talisman before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. To further compound the problem, Constantine seems to have re-introduced the chi-rho in the fourth century with an innovated meaning, something I will explore in-depth in Chapter 3.

For now, though, it is enough to note that, as Bruun states,

> Thus we are left with the problem of why Constantine would have chosen, in a Latin-speaking area, a monogram composed by two Greek letters…Today, the answer seems to be that, whatever the sign originally meant in the eyes and in the mind of Constantine, it underwent a long development until it was accepted as a Christian sign and symbol, and until it achieved the distinction of a Christogram.
>
> Bruun (1997), 45

[90] See Finegan (1969), 234. Frakes (2006: 104) sees similarities between the ankh and the chi-rho. Drake (2000: 203) believes that the tau-rho resembles a solar disk, an emblem of solar worship found in the Danubian provinces. The connection with solar worship would tie the symbol with the panegyric of 310 CE and, possibly, Sol. Unfortunately, the fact that the tau-rho was in use much earlier than the fourth century disproves this theory.
[91] Hurtado (2006) 146.

This quote summarizes the multivalent quality of the chi-rho as a symbol. I believe, however, that we should also emphasize the pre-Constantinian uses of the symbol and Constantine's agency, thus my version of the statement would be amended as follows:

> …whatever the sign originally meant *before the fourth century* in the eyes and in the mind of Constantine, *his adoption of the symbol began* a long development until it was accepted as a Christian sign and symbol, and until it achieved the distinction of a Christogram.

If, as Bruun states, the symbol underwent a development in the fourth century, a study of the uses of the symbol in the fourth century needs to take place. This analysis is the focus of my dissertation. The 'Constantinian' monogram has been discussed for decades, and there is still no clear picture of the meaning behind it. There is also a prevalent bias towards viewing the symbol in a strictly Christian light. It is perhaps safest to say that the symbol could have held different meanings for different groups, depending on who viewed it and in what context. Therefore, the gradual addition of multivalent meanings is an intriguing theory that ought to be explored further.

It seems clear from the preceding discussion that there is no consensus on Constantine's vision or, indeed, what symbol the ancient sources were describing. I began this chapter with a version of Constantine's version as told by the historian Socrates in the fifth century.[92] By that date, the narrative had changed once more, and the sign Constantine saw in the sky became a cross. This quote demonstrates that we should consider ancient sources cautiously. In fact, the cross may have actually been the sign Eusebius originally intended to describe. He states that before Constantine received a visit by Christ in his dream describing a chi-rho, he saw a cross of

[92] The Greek text of the quote is as follows: *Ἐν τοιαύτῃ τοίνυν ἀμφισβητήσει τυγχάνοντι, καί που ἅμα τοῖς στρατιώταις ὁδεύοντι, συνέβη θαυμάσιόν τι καὶ λόγου κρεῖττον θεάσασθαι. περὶ γὰρ μεσημβρινὰς ἡλίου ὥρας, ἤδη τῆς ἡμέρας ἀποκλινούσης, εἶδεν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ στύλον φωτὸς σταυροειδῆ, ἐν ᾧ γράμματα ἦν λέγοντα, Ἐν τούτῳ νίκα.* The Greek text is taken from R. Hussey (1853) and the translation is from A. C. Zenos (1890).

light in the sky. Several scholars have already pointed out discrepancies between Constantine's vision in the sky and the symbol given to him in the dream.[93] In addition, confusion surrounding the intended symbol is amplified because the *labarum* is itself cross-shaped (as was the traditional *vexillum*). However, the cross was not used prevalently in fourth-century art.[94] Therefore, we need to be careful when assigning meaning to literary sources without examining the material evidence. If the chi-rho was the symbol more frequently employed by the imperial family, why was it preferred over a pre-existing Christian sign, such as the tau-rho that Lactantius mentions? These are the questions that must be addressed to further the scholarship on the subject.

[93] Cameron & Hall (1999), 207; Drake (2000), 201; Gould (2007), 128; and Green (2010a), 225. According to Finegan (1969: 234), the tau was viewed by the ancient Romans as a simple cross, and thus the staurogram, as its name suggests, may have been conflated with the cross. Drake (2000: 201) wonders at the discrepancy between the sign Constantine originally saw and the symbol that he later employed. Synder (1985: 27) believes the chi-rho itself became a symbol of the cross. However, there is nothing in the literary sources or the material evidence to suggest this.

[94] Longenecker (2015) goes a long way to prove that the cross was used before the fourth century, but even he states that it was used much more frequently after the fourth century. There is a surprising lack of evidence for the use of the cross in the Christian catacombs, which he himself calls curious (see Longenecker 2015: 179).

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY, SOCIAL SEMIOTICS, AND THE PROBLEMATIC INTERPRETATION OF MEANING

> *It seems a strange thing, when one comes to ponder over it, that a sign should leave its interpreter to supply a part of its meaning; but the explanation of the phenomenon lies in the fact that the entire universe…is perfused with signs, if it is not composed exclusively of signs.*
>
> Peirce (1998), 394

****

This chapter explores the problematic interpretation of the meaning behind symbols by delving into the theory of social semiotics and detailing how its application to the examination of the chi-rho and the tau-rho in the fourth century can further the scholarship written on the two symbols and enhance our understanding of their application in fourth-century art. I have divided the chapter into two main parts: theory and methodology. The first part discusses the theory of semiotics. It will answer two main questions: what is semiotic theory, and why is it important to my dissertation. The second part of the chapter outlines my methodology and the scope of my dissertation. It will demonstrate how semiotic theory can be applied to analyzing the chi-rho and tau-rho in fourth-century art. Before delving further into social semiotic theory, I will begin with a brief outline of the general field of semiotics.

2.1 THE THEORY OF (SOCIAL) SEMIOTICS

In the most basic sense of the term, semiotics is the study of signs. Signs are things that stand in place of something else, and scholars from across various fields of academia have studied their

use.[1] Semiotics, however, has commonly been associated with the field of linguistics and, in particular, with the examination of words.[2] Two of its chief exponents are Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce, whose contributions to the study of semiotics will now be summarized.

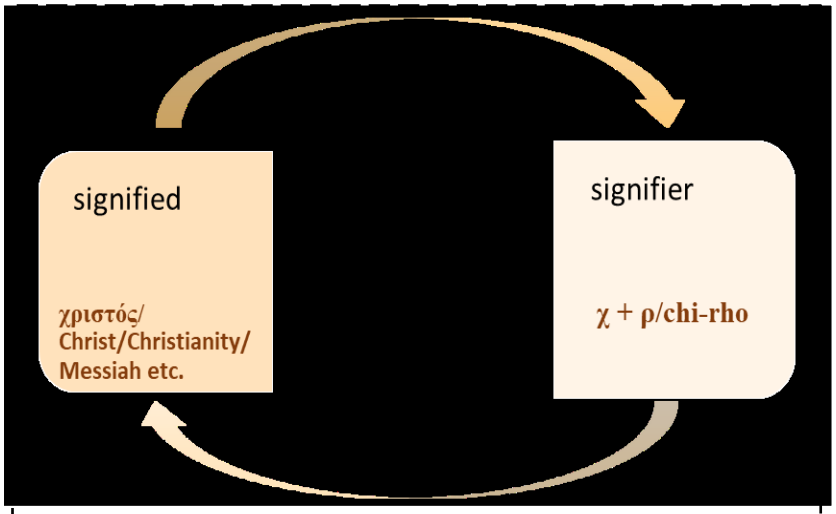

Figure 2.1 Diagram of the relationship between signifier and signified according to de Saussure's theory of signs. A sign signifies the ongoing relationship between the signifier and the signified in the mind of the sign-user. Here, the chi-rho (*sign*) represents the chi and the rho (*signifier*) which triggers the concept of Christ (*signified*). The signifier and the signified then perpetually reinforce each other. Based on the graphic representation in Chandler (2002), 18.

2.1.1 A Synopsis of Semiotic Theory

Ferdinand de Saussure, a scholar of linguist signs, was the first to propose the theory of semiotics in his 1916 seminal work *Course in General Linguistics*. A sign consists of two elements: the *signifier* and the *signified* (the concept brought about by the signifier).[3] Applying de Saussure's

[1] More specifically, semiotics is the science of signs, symbols, signifying systems, and the interpretation of everything that can be considered a form of code or text used to communicate meaning (Petocz 2011:101). For some examples of the vast amount of literature from scholars of various fields who utilize semiotics, see: Hamel (2011); Howells & Negreiros (2012); Liu (2011); Poyatos (1998); and Tarasti (2012).
[2] For a more in-depth discussion on the development of semiotics, see the *Handbook of Semiotics* by Nöth (1990).
[3] de Saussure (2011), 66-67. The version of de Saussure's text that I used is a new English edition edited by P. Meisel and H. Saussy. Since de Saussure only studied linguistic signs, the signifier was always a sound-image. The *signifier* and the *signified* are closely linked together, and each evokes the other so that a person can think about the *signified* and use the *signifier*. This dichotomy of signifier (whether a word, image or something else) and the

theory to the study of the 'Constantinian' monogram, the image of the chi-rho (or the tau-rho) would be the *sign* that represents the chi and the rho. The chi and the rho (forming the word chi-rho) together make up the *signifier.* Together they trigger the chi-rho's (possible) meaning of Christ, which would be the *signified* (see **Figure 2.1**). The *signifier* and *signified* perpetually reinforce each other and, thus, the *sign* represents their ongoing relationship in the mind of the sign-user.

For a sign to convey any meaning, it must first be processed by the listener or viewer. Therefore, in addition to the *signifier* and *signified*, de Saussure states that there is a third component involved in interpreting signs: the mind of the sign-user (interpreter).[4] The interpreter receiving the sign can determine its meaning because the *signifier* has been linked to its *signified*, statically, as agreed upon by the culture using it.[5] Derrida, however, disagrees with de Saussure's premise, stating that signs are dynamic and derive their meaning from the movement between one signifier and the next.[6] This dynamism allows for the mutability of signs, which should be kept in mind when examining the development of the 'Constantinian' monogram in the fourth century. For example, the interpretation of the chi-rho would differ if the ancient sign-user were a 'pagan' Greek speaker who was familiar with the word (χρηστόν) *chreston*, but not (χριστός) *christos*. Their knowledge of the word would influence how they decoded the sign.

Finally, de Saussure also thought that signs were only arbitrarily related to the objects they signified and stated that all the other *signifiers* found within the sign system help determine

signified (the *meaning* of the sign) has been widely accepted, although different fields of study (for instance, linguistics, art history and literary criticism) have often modified it (see Semenenko (2012: 76) and also Bal & Bryson (1991)). Scholars in these fields of study have applied the terms *signifier* and *signified* to signs (such as images, gestures, music, etc.) other than words.

[4] Robinson (2010), 18.

[5] Bal & Bryson (1991), 192. For more on this topic, see the section on *Social Semiotics* below.

[6] Derrida (1972), 29-30. See also Bal & Bryson (1991), 192.

the meaning of the *signifier*.[7] The interpreter cannot take the context in which signs are found for granted. In terms of the 'Constantinian' monogram, this means acknowledging not only the symbols and images that occur within the same visual field on the object but also the metastructure – for example, the form of artwork, the place of origin, etcetera – in which the symbol appears. The context in which the sign is found is particularly crucial in the current study, which examines the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho on coins and inscriptions. For instance, if a chi-rho appears on a piece of papyrus next to a line from the *Iliad*, the context might indicate that the appropriate way to decode the symbol is with the word *chreston*. Those who study the specific field of social semiotics, discussed in more detail below, stress the importance of context.

The second major proponent of semiotics, Charles Sanders Peirce, describes a sign as anything connected to a second thing, its object, as conveyed by a third thing, its interpretant, thus bringing the sign into relation with the same object.[8] He believes that a dialogue of sorts occurs between the sign, the object to which it refers and the interpretant (the mental sign created by the sign). The three work together in a continuous loop to reinforce the sign's meaning. Applying Peirce's theory of semiotics to the chi-rho, the symbol (☧) is the *representamen* that refers both to the *object* (the physical Christ) and the *interpretant* (the idea of *Christ)*, all of

[7] Robinson (2010), 19; and de Saussure (2011), 67. de Saussure states that symbols are never wholly arbitrary, something linguistic signs are, as a portion of the symbol contains a natural link between the signifier and the signified. Hodge and Kress (1988: 21) disagree with this statement, stating that some linguistic signs are somewhat motivated (some words even mimic sounds). They believe that Peirce's categorization of three groups of signs is more accurate than de Saussure's theory.

[8] Peirce (1932), § 1.92. See also Robinson (2010), 17-18. The interpretant is not the same as the physical object, but rather, it is a more elaborate sign of the original sign. It is the response produced from the sign (Robinson 2010: 33). Therefore, it is the idea of that object or concept created in the mind of the person who engages with the symbol, rather than a "meaning" in the strictest sense. The interpretant should also not be confused with the interpreter since conscious awareness of the sign is not needed for the message of the sign to be conveyed (Robinson 2010:18). Whether consciously aware of the signs or not, the three aspects are connected with each other and continue to refer to each other in an endless loop of semiosis. Should the series of interpretants come to an end, the sign would be considered imperfect (Peirce 1932: § 4.303).

which interact together in a loop. The interaction strengthens the chi-rho's meaning and facilitates the interpretation arrived at by the sign-user (see **Figure 2.2**).

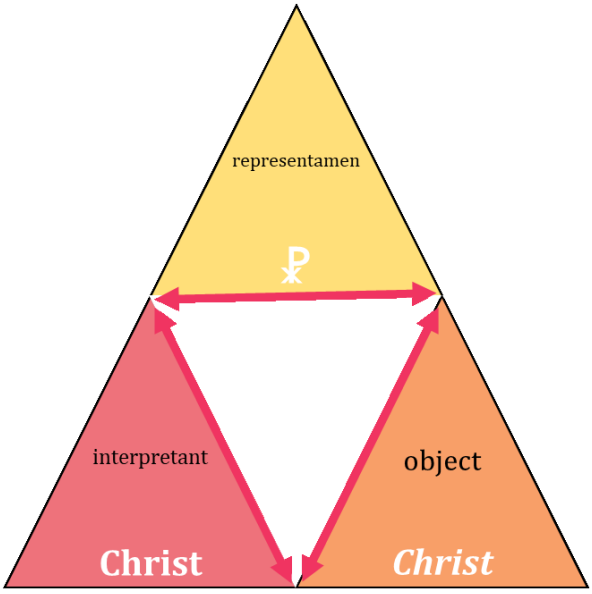

Figure 2.2 Diagram of the relationship between object, interpretant, and representamen according to Peirce's theory of signs. Here, a chi-rho (the representamen) refers to both the physical Christ (object) and the concept of *Christ* (interpretant).
Based on the graphic representation in Chandler (2002), 34.

Peirce emphasizes the importance of the interpretant in semiosis. In and of themselves, the signs do not identify the objects, but rather the signs presuppose knowledge of the objects being evoked.[9] The viewer of the sign needs to have a former understanding of what the sign means in order for the sign to convey its meaning effectively. Peirce states that without intelligent consciousness, the meaning of signs is undiscoverable.[10] The culture that creates signs can convey meaning through them because of the agreed-upon conventions of the signs. Peirce elaborates on his model of signs by stating that there are three types of signs: icons, indexes and symbols.[11] Since the chi-rho and the tau-rho are both symbols, this is the category of signs relevant to understanding how they signify meaning and will now be discussed in more detail.

[9] Peirce (1932), § 3.298.
[10] Peirce (1932), § 4.303.
[11] An icon is a sign that is wholly unconnected with the object that it represents, but it has a likeness to that object or attributes that look like the object, which allows it to function as a sign (Peirce 1932: § 3.299), whereas an index is a sign that refers to its object because it is being altered by that object. Because of this, the sign has to have some characteristic in common with its object and is, in turn, modified by the object (Peirce 1932: § 5.248). For more on these three types of signs, see van Leeuwen (2005), 49.

According to Peirce, a symbol is "a sign which is constituted a sign merely or mainly by the fact that it is used and understood as such, whether the habit is natural or conventional, and without regard to the motives which originally governed its selection."[12] The object being signified by the symbol is connected to an icon, which is evoked in the interpreter's mind once they have encountered the symbol.[13] Of particular importance for the current study is the concept that a sign is understood as such *without regard to the motives that initially governed its selection.* Therefore, the question we must pose is what interpretant was created in the mind of the ancient sign-user when they encountered either a chi-rho or a tau-rho on an object? The question needs to be addressed regardless of why Constantine initially chose the symbol.

Both the chi-rho and the tau-rho are symbols, and, importantly, both the chi-rho and the tau-rho are themselves composed of symbols taken from the Greek alphabet.[14] A chi (X) and a rho (P) combine to form the chi-rho, whereas a tau (T) and a rho (P) create the tau-rho. Therefore, they are exceedingly complex symbols to study, and while diverse ancient viewers could have had different interpretations of their meaning, some sort of collective agreement as to what the chi-rho and tau-rho stood for amongst communities would have been necessary for them to be successfully deployed as symbols.[15] Symbols are governed by specific rules used in determining the symbols' interpretants.[16] Without these rules, the sign-users would not understand the meaning being conveyed. As Peirce states,

> …nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign; but the character which causes it to be interpreted as referring to its object may be one which might belong to it

[12] Peirce (1932), § 6.307.
[13] Peirce (1932), § 3.295. For the definition of an icon, see Ch.2, fn. 11. Symbols are general in their nature. They do not designate a specific thing, but a kind of thing (Peirce (1932), § 3.301). Therefore, in the example in Figure 2.2, the chi-rho is a general reference to Christ. It is the rest of the language in the sign system (words, images) that provides the more elaborate meaning to the sign-user.
[14] According to Maguire (2017: 224), the chi-rho is also a device that can be employed as an effective instrument regardless of its meaning as a sign.
[15] Mukarovsky (1976), 1.
[16] Peirce (1932), § 3.292.

> irrespective of its object and though that object had never existed, or it may be in a relation to its object which it would have just the same whether it were interpreted as a sign or not.
>
> Peirce (1932) § 6.30

A symbol can function as a symbol even if it is not understood as such, but without the mind of the sign-user to interpret the symbol, the connection between the symbol and the object/concept would not exist.[17] Despite this, symbols can occur even without an interpreter present because they continue to exist in the minds of the sign-users, whether or not they are currently being implemented.[18] The symbol's meaning is still accessible without the symbol being present in any physical form and can be readily recalled when needed. As exemplified above (Figure 2.2), the chi-rho symbolizes Christ's name and, therefore, Christ himself. Since symbols are abstract, the physical Christ need not even have existed for the symbol to hold its meaning. Nevertheless, in this example, the chi-rho embodies Christ because it is the interpretation given to the sign by the particular sign-user encountering it.

In addition, symbols grow. They evolve from other signs, especially icons, and in order to make a new symbol, one must use pre-existing concepts (in other words, pre-existing symbols).[19] Not only do symbols build upon other symbols, but their meanings also evolve and grow as they are used and experienced by members of the sign-using group.[20] The knowledge of the meaning of symbols is passed on to members – or specific sub-group members – within the culture. In this way, the signification being conveyed is indoctrinated from sign-user to sign-user, thus ensuring that members of a particular sign-using group know the "appropriate" interpretation of the signs they encounter. Nevertheless, the very nature of symbols can make their interpretation

[17] Peirce (1932), § 3.299.
[18] Peirce (1932), § 3.301. For example, placing a chi-rho on an object and then destroying it will not remove the meaning of the symbol since that continues to live in the mind of the interpreter.
[19] Peirce (1932), § 3.302.
[20] Peirce (1932), § 3.302.

problematic. In order to avoid misperception of the symbol, the sign-user needs to know previous instances of the particular meaning of the symbol.[21] As we have seen in Chapter 1, there are various interpretations of the chi-rho. By examining the contexts in which the chi-rho and tau-rho were initially found and thus encountered in the fourth century, we can begin to build a picture of how the ancient sign-user interpreted the symbols.

2.1.2 Saint Augustine's Theory of Signs

Now that I have given a brief summary of what semiotics is, I will turn to why it is a valuable theory in the context of my dissertation. The ancient Greeks and Romans had their own theories involving signs. While it goes beyond the scope of this chapter to list every contribution made to the field of semiotics by ancient authors,[22] the majority of whom were philosophers, it is important to discuss the contributions of one author, Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE). Writing at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth centuries, his theory of signs is relevant to the current study as he wrote it within a century of the development of the chi-rho and tau-rho as symbols.

Saint Augustine wrote about signs in his treatise *De Doctrina Christiana*. Two passages are central for illuminating how symbols might have been understood in the fourth century. In the first excerpt, Augustine tells his readers that signs are one of the two instruments used in teaching:

> *Omnis doctrina vel rerum est vel signorum, sed res signa discuntur. Proprie autem nunc res appellavi, quae non ad significandum aliquid adhibentur, sicuti est lignum, lapis, pecus atque huiusmodi cetera; sed non illud lignum quod in aquas Amaras*

[21] Peirce (1932), § 5.249. Peirce states that there must be "existent instances of what the symbol denotes." He continues by saying that these existent instances will affect the meaning of the symbol (see also § 3.292). In other words, the association of the symbol to existing exempla will either perpetuate or alter the meaning that is currently in place.

[22] For more information on the development of semiotics by ancient authors, see: Nöth (1990); Robinson (2010); and van Leeuwen (2005). Aristotle, in particular, made contributions to the study of signs in his *De Interpretatione*. For more information on Aristotle's theory of signs, see de Cuypere and Willems (2008), who explore the work of several authors' interpretation of Aristotle's concept of signs.

Moysen misisse legimus, ut amaritudine carerent, neque ille lapis quem Iacob sibi ad caput posuerat, neque illus pecus quod pro filio immolavit Abraham. Hae namque ita res sunt, ut aliarum etiam signa sint rerum. Sunt autem alia signa quorum omnis usus in significando est, sicuti sunt verba. Nemo enim utitur verbis nisi aliquid significandi gratia. Ex quo intellegitur quid appellem signa: res eas videlicet quae ad significandum aliquid adhibentur. Quam ob rem omne signum etiam res aliqua est; quod enim nulla res est, omnino nihil est. Non autem omnis res etiam signum est.

All teaching is teaching of either things or signs, but things are learnt through signs. What I now call things in the strict sense are things such as logs, stones, sheep, and so on, which are not employed to signify something; but I do not include the log which we read that Moses threw into the bitter waters to make them lose their bitter taste, or the stone which Jacob placed under his head, or the sheep which Abraham sacrificed in place of his son. These are things, but they are at the same time signs of other things. There are other signs whose whole function consists in signifying. Words, for example: nobody uses words except in order to signify something. So every sign is also a thing, since what is not a thing does not exist. But it is not true that every thing is also a sign.[23]

Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, 1.2.

For Augustine, "things" and "signs" are two different concepts. Things are objects that exist in the world, such as wood and stone. Signs are used to indicate – or used in place of – something else. In this excerpt, Augustine mentions two categories of signs. The first type of sign is that which can be used in place of something else, for example, using a stone as a pillow. Here, the object is both a stone, what it *actually* is, and a pillow, what it is being *perceived (or used)* as by the sign-user. The second category of signs is that which is strictly employed as a sign, such as a word. He further states that every sign has to relate back to something that actually exists, whether it is an object or concept.

Further along in *De Doctrina Christiana*, Augustine elaborates on his theory of signs:

...Signum est enim res praeter speciem quam ingerit sensibus aliud aliquid ex se faciens in cogitationem venire; sicut vestigio viso transisse animal cuius vestigium est cogitamus et fumo viso ignem subesse cognoscimus, et voce animantis audita affectionem animi eius advertimus, et tuba sonante milites vel progredi se vel regredi, et si quid aliud pugna postulat, oportere noverunt.

Signorum igitur alia sunt naturalia, alia data. Naturalia sunt quae sine voluntate atque ullo appetitu significandi praeter se aliquid aliud ex se cognosci faciunt, sicuti

[23] Text and translation from R. P. H. Green (1995).

est fumus significans ignem. Non enim volens significare id facit, sed rerum expertarum animadversione et notatione cognoscitur ignem subesse, etiam si fumus solus appareat. Sed et vestigium transeuntis animantis ad hoc genus pertinet, et vultus irati seu tristis affectionem animi significat, etiam nulla eius voluntate qui aut iratus aut tristis est, aut si quis alius motus animi vultu indice proditur, etiam nobis non id agentibus ut prodatur…

Data vero signa sunt quae sibi quaeque viventia invicem dant ad demonstrandos quantum possunt motus animi sui vel sensa aut intellecta quaelibet. Nec ulla causa est nobis significandi, id est signi dandi, nisi ad depromendum et traiciendum in alterius animum id quod animo gerit qui signum dat… Quae utrum, sicut vultus aut dolentis clamor, sine voluntate significandi sequantur motum animi an vere ad significandum dentur, alia quaestio est et ad rem quae agitur non pertinet.

…For a sign is a thing which of itself makes some other thing come to mind, besides the impression that it presents to the senses. So when we see a footprint we think that the animal whose footprint it is has passed by; when we see smoke we realize that there is fire beneath it; when we hear the voice of an animate being we note its feeling; and when the trumpet sounds soldiers know they must advance or retreat or do whatever else the state of the battle demands.

Some signs are natural, others given. Natural signs are those which without a wish or any urge to signify cause something else besides themselves to be known from them, like smoke, which signifies fire. It does not signify fire because it wishes to do so; but because of our observation and attention to things that we have experienced it is realized that there is fire beneath it, even if nothing but smoke appears. The footprint of a passing animal also belongs to this category. The expression of an angry or depressed person signifies an emotional state even if there is no such wish on the part of the person who is angry or depressed, and likewise any other emotion is revealed by the evidence of the face even if we are not seeking to reveal it…

Given signs are those which living things give to each other, in order to show, to the best of their ability, the emotions of their minds, or anything that they have felt or learnt. There is no reason for us to signify something (that is, to give a sign) except to express and transmit to another's mind what is in the mind of the person who gives the sign… Whether (as with a facial expression or a shout of pain) they accompany emotion without any desire to signify, or whether they are really given in order to signify something, is another question, and irrelevant to the matter in hand.[24]

Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, 2.1.2-2.3.4

Augustine defines a sign as something that causes *something else* to come to mind *(signum est enim res…aliud* ***aliquid*** *ex se faciens in cogitationem venire*). This theory of signs prefigures the

[24] Text and translation by R. P. H. Green (1995).

medieval definition, ***aliquid pro aliquo*** *(something for something)*,[25] in which the sign brings to mind the object or concept that it stands for. For Augustine, the viewer's mind was the key to any act of semiosis, as a sign was something that caused something else to come to mind.

Augustine divides those signs that exist to signify into two categories: natural signs and given signs.[26] Since both the chi-rho and tau-rho are given signs, a discussion of this concept is important for understanding the use of the symbols in the fourth century. Given signs are those signs that convey meaning even though they are entirely arbitrary. The purpose of these signs is to convey meaning to another person; therefore, they are intentional, which is in contrast to natural signs. Given signs are established by a group of people, which harkens back to the arbitrariness of signs as discussed by Aristotle.[27] Indeed, Augustine deliberates the problem of being ignorant of the meaning of some signs because of their arbitrary nature.[28] Words are examples of the kinds of signs whose meaning has been agreed upon by convention. Those ignorant of the words being spoken or written do not know the conventional use of the sign. Both the chi-rho and the tau-rho fall into this category of signs because those without knowledge of the meaning of the signs cannot interpret them correctly.

In developing his theory of signs, Augustine was partially influenced by the Epicurean understanding of the sign as something that represents an object or concept that is not currently present (a dyadic model of signs) and also by the Stoics, who suggested the interpreter as the

[25] Nöth, (1990), 17. According to Robinson (2010: 17), this was the starting point of the development of a general definition of the word sign. Robinson goes on to say that this dyadic definition of a sign was later expanded by Peirce (see above) to have three, rather than two, parts.
[26] Natural signs are signs because they give knowledge of something else, but the knowledge they convey is unintentional. These natural signs are similar to Peirce's category of indexical signs. Augustine gives the example of a footprint in the sand. It tells the person perceiving the footprint that someone has been walking in the sand, but it is not, necessarily, intentionally left behind as a signifier.
[27] Aristotle states that signs are only significant because of convention (*De Int.* 1.2).
[28] August. *De Doc. Chris.* 2.10.15. The arbitrary nature of signs is a concern for Augustine because he worries about ambiguous signs preventing the understanding of scripture.

third variable needed for sign interpretation.[29] Although Augustine does not discuss the relevance of the background of the sign interpreter, he explains that signs are used to relay information from the mind of one person to another. Therefore, according to Augustine, it would have been someone wishing to convey a specific message to an intended audience who would have used either the chi-rho or the tau-rho on an object.

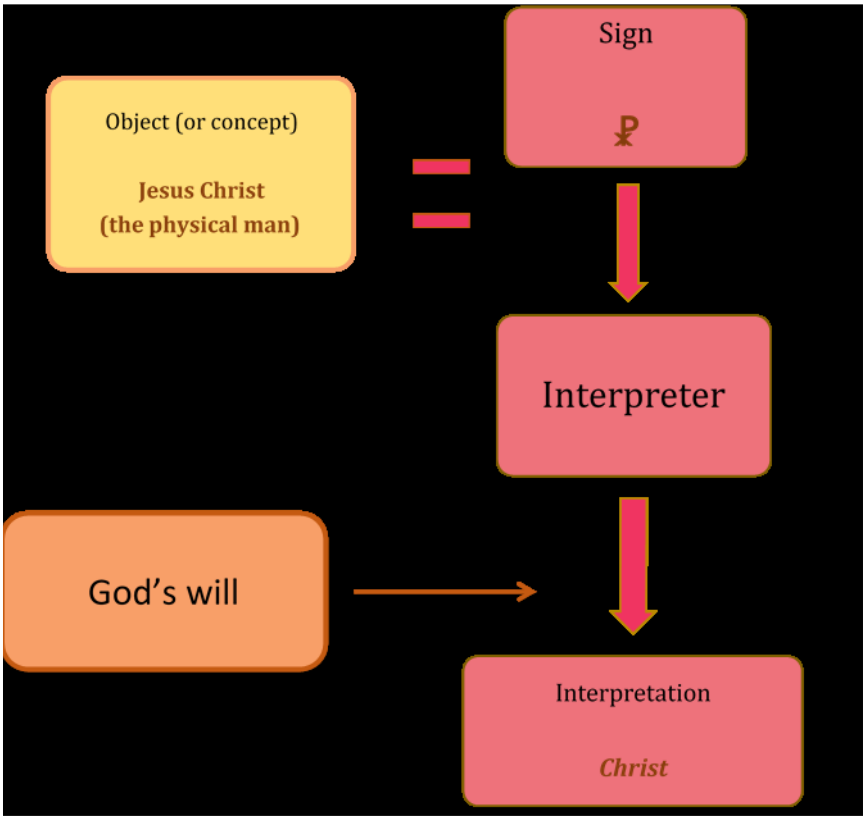

Figure 2.3 Diagram of the interpretation of a symbol according to St. Augustine's theory of signs. A sign is equal to the object (or concept) it signifies. An interpreter, helped by God's will, decodes the sign's intended meaning.

In addition to the above-mentioned variables, Augustine added a further Christian interpretation to signs, as he believed that the act of semiosis was in itself indexical of God's will.[30] It is because of God's will that humanity can use and decode signs. Signs would not exist

[29] Nöth (1990), 17.
[30] Nöth (1990), 15-17.

without God. All of Augustine's concepts combined suggest an interaction between the sign (which is equal to the object), the interpreter and the interpretation. If we apply his theory to the chi-rho, we see that it is the interpreter who needs to determine the message intended by the sign (see **Figure 2.3**).[31]In the example given in Figure 2.3, the interpreter views the chi-rho, which stands for the physical Christ. The interpreter's mind then conceptualizes *Christ* as an interpretation of the chi-rho. Augustine, then, thought about signs in a similar way to many modern semioticians, like de Saussure and Peirce. Because he was so influential and many of his ideas were adopted and applied to later theories – and because he was writing so close in time to the development of the chi-rho and tau-rho as symbols – Augustine's theory is particularly relevant for attempting to determine the mindset of the ancient viewer when encountering these symbols. His addition of the interpreter to the understanding of signs indicates an awareness of semiotics, although it was not termed as such at the time, shortly after the popularization of these two symbols under Constantine.

2.1.3 Social Semiotics

While Augustine undoubtedly contributed to the development of semiotics, he did not consider the background of the sign-user a significant component towards the interpretation of signs. However, those who study social semiotics stress both the background of the sign-user and the context in which the sign is found as fundamental aspects in determining how signs are interpreted. In his book *Introducing Social Semiotics* (2005), Theo van Leeuwen introduces the term social semiotics, which he defines as the study of:

> … resources [which] are signifiers, observable actions and objects that have been drawn into the domain of social communication and that have a theoretical semiotic potential constituted by all their past uses and all their potential uses and an actual semiotic potential constituted by those past uses that are known to and considered

[31] The following diagram is my own interpretation of Augustine's opinion of signs.

> relevant by the users of the resource, and by such potential uses as might be uncovered by the users on the basis of their specific needs and interests. Such uses take place in a social context, and this context may either have rules or best practices that regulate how specific semiotic resources can be used, or leave the users relatively free in their use of the resource.
>
> van Leeuwen (2005), 4

As this passage demonstrates, social semiotics differs from the semiotics described by de Saussure and Peirce in that its proponents wish to study the *social* aspect of the contexts in which signs are developed. Different groups interact with the material world in different ways, allowing for diverse social and cultural meanings. Signifiers are not created in a vacuum; instead, sign-users create and use them in particular social settings. Furthermore, these signs are relevant only to those sign-users who are "in the know" of the meaning of the resource. Signs also, theoretically, have the potential to be imbued with *all of their past uses.* If, for instance, Constantine adopted a sign used before the fourth century – a topic explored in detail in Chapter 3 – the sign's past meaning(s) could have potential relevance to its use in the fourth century.

According to Bal and Bryson, five codes help sign-users decode signs.[32] Three are particularly relevant to the study of social semiotics. The first is the *semic* code, which uses background information to help make sense of the visual image. The second is the *symbolic* code, which uses symbolic interpretation, such as emotions, to interpret the image. Finally, the referential code uses cultural knowledge to interpret the image (for example, a certain type of artistic movement). I believe these three hermeneutic codes can be applied to three of the underlying ideas that feature in social semiotics: the importance of the sign-user (*symbolic* code), the influence of culture (*referential code*), and the importance of the social contexts in which signs exist (*semic* code). I will now turn to a more in-depth discussion of these concepts.

[32] Bal & Bryson (1991), 203. They base this on Roland Barthes' five codes used in interpretating texts.

2.1.3.a The Sign-User

In social semiotics, the focus is not only on the sign and what it signifies but also on the sign-user. It is only within the sign-user's mind that the connection between the signifier and the signified is created. Without the sign-user, the meaning being conveyed would not exist.[33] At the most basic level, a sign's meaning is ultimately determined by the sign-user. While it is true that the author of the sign may have intended to convey a particular meaning, it is up to the sign-user to determine what that meaning might be. Therefore, it is essential to remember that the sign-user has a prior history of learned associations with familiar signs.[34] These associations help the sign-user determine the meaning of a particular sign. Perception is subjective. It is not a natural psychological reaction that occurs between the visual cues and the brain; rather, it is something that develops over time.[35] Therefore, different sign-users may have different observations because of their particular interests and desires.[36] Their needs might influence how they view and interpret a given sign.

The sign-user's perception of the sign is important, but so is their apperception. Apperception is the mind's way of relating new information to what it has experienced in the past.[37] Meaning cannot exist without prior perception of the sign.[38] According to Elsner, viewing is always a twofold process of interpretation. Viewers interpret a sign based on their previous knowledge of the sign, but their concept of its meaning is also subtly changed each time they

[33] Kaartinen & Latomaa (2011), 236. Semenenko compares semiotic systems to the interface of an operating system (2012: 24). Without a user manipulating and altering these signs, they would not exist. Petocz believes that there is a problematic lack of interest in the sign-user by those scholars who study semiotics (2011: 106). Petocz states that this is one reason why psychology has been hostile to using the theories proposed in the field of semiotics. The lack of interest in the sign-user is particularly interesting because symbols allow for greater human agency (see Wood 2011: 60).
[34] Petocz (2011), 123.
[35] Liu (2011), 33. Perception is one of the areas in which humans differ from the rest of the animal kingdom.
[36] van Leeuwen (2005), 4-5.
[37] Liu (2011), 33.
[38] Petocz (2011), 120.

interact with the sign again.[39] This subtle change over time is important to note when attempting to understand the long history of the development of the chi-rho and tau-rho as fourth-century symbols. Even if a sign is found twice in an identical setting – created identically – it is not perceived in the same way by the sign-user. The initial encounter will always be the first time they saw the sign in that particular setting, and, therefore, the sign-user will always be influenced by that first experience.[40] On the other hand, signs that are not familiar to the sign-user might be perceived as identical to other signs that they do know.[41] For instance, any image of a cross might appear to have religious connotations to a Christian who is unaware of other potential meanings (such as a thin cross, which is also the Chinese symbol, shí, for the number 10).

Through the sign-user, subjectivity is introduced into the interpretation of the meaning of the sign.[42] To this end, the interpretation of signs is – to some degree – relative and subject to change depending on the sign-user.[43] Since no two people are the same, so too, no two interpretations are absolutely identical. Therefore, it will be impossible to determine the mindset of each individual ancient sign-user when encountering the chi-rho and the tau-rho. However, in addition to the sign-user's particular experiences, their cultural background may also influence how they interpret a sign, and this will be a more accessible variable to investigate when examining the fourth-century uses of the symbols.

2.1.3.b The Influence of Culture

The sign-user's general background, specifically their culture, is essential in determining how a sign is interpreted. Culture is the sign-user's ethnicity and encompasses aspects of any sub-

[39] Elsner (1995), 4.
[40] Steiner (2007), 37.
[41] Semenenko (2012), 87.
[42] Wood (2011), 39. For more on the subject of subjectivity, see also the sections on culture and context below.
[43] Semenenko (2012), 53. Culture also influences perception.

groups they may belong to (such as religious, political, economic, etcetera). The interpretation of the meaning of a sign is possible because the sign-user is familiar with the sign's function in their particular culture.[44] This cultural knowledge is connected to the culture's collective memory, which serves as a mechanism to disseminate and preserve the values that its people hold.[45] How the symbol is interpreted depends on the cultural background of the sign-user. Their affiliation with specific sub-groups allows them to decipher symbols in culturally appropriate ways.

As cultures change, the need for new meanings might arise, and existing resources might be used in new ways.[46] A sign that is already in existence can be changed to suit the evolving culture's needs. However, if the sign-user does not have the cultural background necessary to 'decode' the meaning of a sign, they might ignore the message it conveys.[47] While this is a possibility, each sign-user has their *umwelt,* or self-world*,* replete with cultural memories that help them decode signs.[48] Because we are, as Peirce said, inundated with signs throughout our lives, there might be some past association that can help with deciphering the code. In this way, the ancient viewer would have used the knowledge at their disposal to decode the chi-rho or tau-rho on the objects they encountered. The chi-rho itself can be viewed as a sign imbuing new

[44] Bal & Bryson (1991), 191. Bal and Bryson believe that idioms exist in art the same way they do in language. Therefore, some symbols may 'make sense' to the people of a particular cultural background in a way that is difficult, but not impossible, for outsiders to understand.
[45] Semenenko (2012), 100.
[46] van Leeuwen (2005), 26. The easiest way to create a new sign is to relate it to a previously known sign. The process of relating a new meaning to an old sign, how semiotic innovations can occur, is through metaphors. The meaning of one sign is transferred to another based on some similarity between the two signs, and thus, a new sign is created (van Leeuwan 2005: 29-30). Nevertheless, the new sign is still related in some way to the original sign. Metaphor is not only used in literature but also in images. For example, the image of a man holding a lamb across his shoulders is the metaphor for Jesus as the good shepherd. The metaphor is based on a passage in John 10:1-21 when Jesus lays his life down for the sheep he is tending. With this imagery, Jesus takes on the qualities of the shepherd caring for his flock, and thus, a new sign is created. For more on the good shepherd, see Donfried & Richardson (1998: 84).
[47] Semenenko (2012), 116.
[48] Semenenko (2012), 116.

meaning through a culture shift. Whether or not the symbol stood for Christ, the fact that Constantine adopted it would have changed its pre-fourth-century meaning by being associated with the emperor and his victory at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.

As mentioned earlier, there is no such thing as a natural, predetermined meaning for given signs. Additionally, sign-users have their own, personal, cultural preconceptions of signs.[49] Therefore, the ability cultures have in creating signs leads to almost unlimited subjectivity.[50] Because codes are learned, various members of the sign-using group are able to interpret and use codes to different extents based on their familiarity with the code.[51] This subjectivity certainly complicates the study of signs, but situating a sign in its proper cultural context can lead to a better understanding of the sign.

Finally, it is only by examining the social factors occurring when the sign was created that we can also get a sense of the past and our relationship to it.[52] Analyzing a symbol used far in the past can be problematic, as we are looking at the symbol carrying our own cultural baggage. Consequently, determining the meaning the chi-rho and tau-rho may have held for the fourth-century Roman viewer is difficult. Nevertheless, being cognizant of the cultural background in which the sign was developed can lessen any latent bias. Signs have limitless potential meaning, which can only be narrowed down by considering not only the sign-user and his or her cultural background but also the context in which the sign was used.

[49] Bal & Bryson (1991), 207.
[50] Wood (2011), 48. According to Wood, 'unlimited semiosis' is the price that cultures pay the more advanced they become.
[51] Bal & Bryson (1991), 186.
[52] Bal & Bryson (1991), 175.

2.1.3.c Context

Signs are not created in a void. Rather, they occur within specific contexts according to the aforementioned cultural codes.[53] In other words, signs occur in specific historical and material contexts.[54] Just as the sign-user's cultural and individual background is important for understanding the meaning of a sign, so too is the context in which the sign is found. Every symbolic message exists in time and space, and by ignoring the context in which they exist, one can distort the reading of the message.[55] Texts are not found in isolation. Instead, they are perceived in relation to what is found around them.[56] This premise can also be applied to symbols found in art. A symbol used, for instance, in a fourth-century fresco cannot be examined in isolation if other symbols surround it. Its context and connection with the other symbols must be considered to understand how it is being deployed. In addition, any possible meaning can be overridden by another depending on the context in which it occurs.[57] The context in which the sign is found helps the user decode the intended message. For the study of the chi-rho and the tau-rho, the context in which the symbols are found is crucial for determining their intended meaning.

The meanings of signs that exist in cultural memory are transmutable, which gives the sign-user the ability to use previous encounters with the sign to interpret new instances of the sign.[58] Therefore, as the sign appears in new contexts, the sign-user can process the information being presented to them, which aids in interpreting the sign's meaning. New contexts do not

[53] Bal & Bryson (1991), 207. See also the previous section on the importance of culture.
[54] Bal & Bryson (1991), 180.
[55] Hodge & Kress (1988), 163. For instance, even the space in which the sign is found or the colour in which it is rendered could influence the interpretation of the meaning (for more information, see Schapiro 1970: 492 and Veltrusky 1976: 246).
[56] Semenenko (2012), 84.
[57] van Leeuwen (2005), 79.
[58] Semenenko (2012), 100. For more on the meaning of signs, see the next section.

necessitate a change in the sign's meaning, but the context cannot be ignored when attempting to reconstruct the interpretation of the ancient viewer.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

The description of semiotics found in the previous section will influence how the chi-rho and tau-rho are interpreted and discussed in later chapters and guide my study's scope and the type of objects examined. Before diving into these parameters, I will start this section by discussing the implication of social semiotics for analyzing symbols in fourth-century art.

2.2.1 Social Semiotics and Symbols in Fourth-Century Art

Thus far, I have discussed the general theory of semiotics and why understanding and using it is important for studying symbols in the fourth century. Now I will turn to how the theory of social semiotics will be applied to my dissertation. As mentioned in the previous section, the sign-user's personal background, their culture, and the context in which the symbol is found all work together to convey meaning to sign-users. These three elements intersect in the mind of the sign-user to give an interpretation of the sign (see **Figure 2.4**). The key to understanding the symbol is that the viewer has to recognize that a message is being conveyed

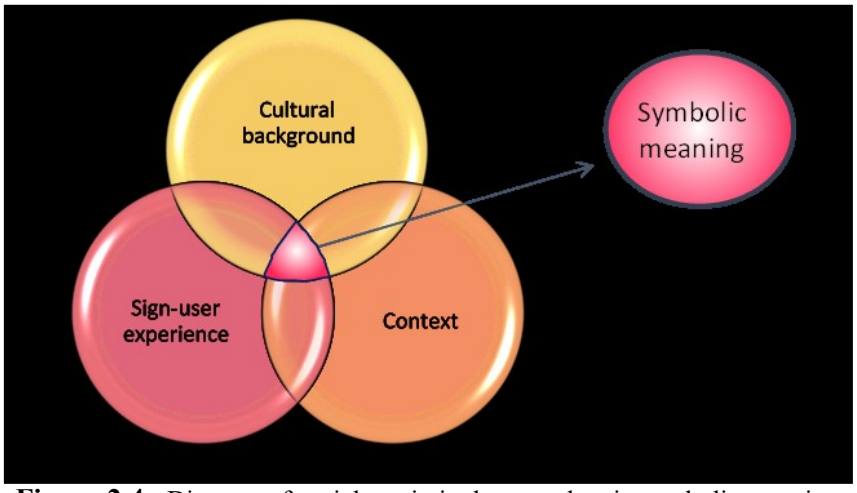

Figure 2.4 Diagram of social semiotic theory, wherein symbolic meaning is found at the intersection of context, cultural background, and sign-user experience.

and have the necessary knowledge to "read" that message.[59] As we have seen, a change in one of these three elements can lead to a change in the interpretation of the sign.

Therefore, the meaning of the chi-rho or tau-rho can only be understood when examining the intersection between all three factors, which could have influenced the sign-user's interpretation of the sign. For example, if the sign-user is a Christian Roman citizen viewing the chi-rho painted on a fresco found in a fourth-century Christian catacomb, the viewer might interpret the symbol as a sign for Christ (see **Figure 2.5**). If, on the other hand, the sign-user is a 'pagan' Roman soldier, who had been present at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge and who sees the symbol years later on a *denarius* as a part of a *labarum* being held by the emperor Constantine, he might interpret the chi-rho as a symbol for the imperial family and their military might (see **Figure 2.6**).

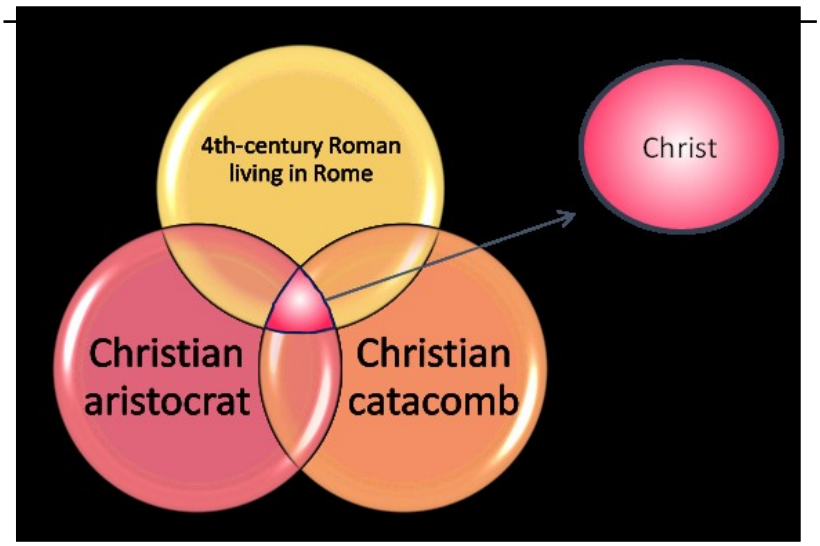

Figure 2.5 An example of a fourth-century Roman Christian aristocrat interpreting a chi-rho in a Christian catacomb as a symbol of *Christ.*

[59] Hodge & Kress (1988), 4.

Besides sign-user background and context impacting how a symbol is read, a change in culture can also alter the perceived meaning of the sign (see **Figure 2.7**). Let us imagine, for example, a first-century Greek scholar in Egypt who encounters the symbol in the margins of a Homeric manuscript. The background of the sign-user and the context in which the sign is used gives the viewer information for decoding the sign, and they interpret it as referring to the Greek word *chreston*, which refers to the concept of "good." All three interpreted meanings are different because of the sign-user's personal experience, culture, and the context in which the sign is being viewed. However, a variation in one element does not necessarily preclude a change in the sign's meaning. Meaning, as

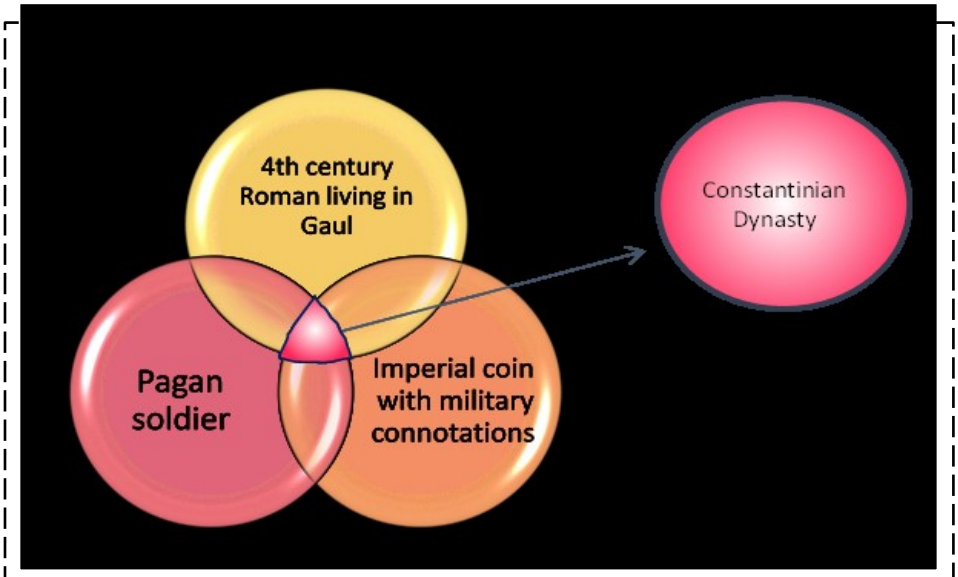

Figure 2.6 An example of a fourth-century Roman 'pagan' soldier interpreting a chi-rho on imperial currency as a symbol of the Constantinian dynasty.

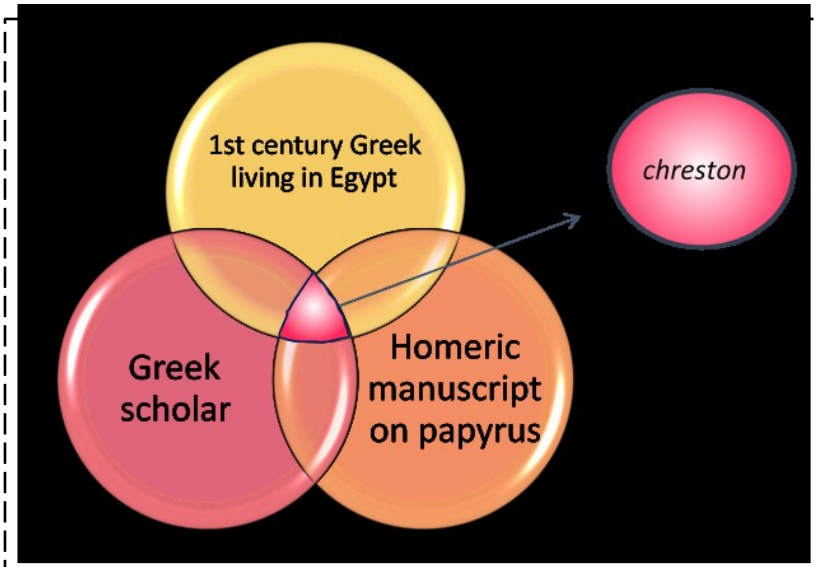

Figure 2.7 An example of a first-century Greek scholar reading a Homeric manuscript interpreting a chi-rho as the Greek word *chreston.*

mentioned above, is a result of the exchange between the viewer and the sign and is *also* a product of the correlation of the sign with other signs.[60] For instance, the 'pagan' Roman soldier mentioned in Figure 2.6 might observe the chi-rho in a Roman catacomb and, if he is aware of the symbol's connection to Christ, might interpret it in the same way as the Christian aristocrat discussed in Figure 2.5.

In addition to being cognizant of the intersectional factors that interact to determine a symbol's meaning while constructing my database and building my argument of the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho in the fourth century, it is also important to be aware that the signification of signs can change. The sign's meaning can be modified based on the needs of those using the sign, and thus one cannot argue for the "appropriateness" or inappropriateness" of signs.[61] Some sign-users might alter the sign slightly by reversing it or placing it at an angle, and since each sign-user has their respective background, the way they use a sign will also differ slightly. As we shall see in future chapters, this practice is evident with both the chi-rho and tau-rho. However, even if signs are arbitrary, the more they are learned, the greater the associations between the sign and the meaning.[62] In this way, viewing a given sign in a given context becomes habitual, and the meaning can be almost taken for granted.

Slight alterations to a sign can also impact its meaning. In social semiotics, an "accent" gives a slightly different social meaning to an established and common set of signs so that viewers with different backgrounds interpret symbols slightly differently.[63] Therefore, a fourth-century Roman living in Britain could theoretically have had the same basic meaning for a tau-rho (Christian) as their North Africa contemporary, but they may have had slight variations in

[60] Semenenko (2012), 45.
[61] van Leeuwen (2005), 48.
[62] Petocz (2011), 124.
[63] Hodge & Kress (1988), 19.

their interpretation (such as different sects of Christianity). These variations could consequently impact how the tau-rho was deployed on objects and, in particular, alongside which images it was used.

The fact that symbols can change based on the needs of culture is also applicable to the study of the chi-rho. The creation and modification of signs take authority, and there are two types of authority used to establish the meaning of signs: impersonal and personal authority.[64] Personal authority, which is the type relevant to the current study, comes from those in power.[65] Generally, it is the ideologies of the ruling class that become dominant.[66] The ruling class does not necessarily mean rulers in the strictest sense, but those who hold sway over particular groups (such as priests). Not only is power necessary for establishing new signs, but it is also only those with power who can change the rules that govern an existing sign.[67] Therefore, it is vital to study not only the culture surrounding the development of a sign but also the authority under which the sign was created.

If the chi-rho meant one thing in its pre-Constantinian usage (such as, for instance, the word *chreston, chrysos*, or a numismatic issue mark, as discussed in Chapter 3), Constantine, as we have seen in the first chapter of this dissertation, undoubtedly later appropriated it as a symbol and the meaning was altered. However, the symbol itself was easy to appropriate because it was coincidentally composed of the first two letters of Christ's name in the Greek alphabet. In borrowing a symbol from another culture, the sign-user demonstrates a connection to that previous culture.[68] Therefore, the fact that the Constantinian chi-rho is not only borrowed from

[64] According to van Leeuwen, inpersoanl authority comes from the authority of texts (which need human agents to implement them) and from traditions. With traditional signs, there are no explicit texts, but there are verbal methods (sayings, proverbs, etc.) that reinforce the signs (van Leeuwen 2005: 54-55).
[65] van Leeuwen (2005), 53.
[66] Hadjinicolaou (1978), 11.
[67] van Leeuwen (2005), 48 and 52. Furthermore, as signs gather significance, they become more strictly regulated.
[68] Uspenskij & Zhivov (2012), 21.

an earlier symbol but also that it uses the Greek alphabet indicates its connection with that earlier culture. Constantine may have been unaware of any other meaning attached to the symbol when he decided to make it the saving sign of God. On the other hand, if the chi-rho was an abbreviation for 'good' and 'gold' – depending on the context in which it was used – before the fourth century (see Chapter 3), Constantine may have deliberately appropriated it for its auspicious signification. In any case, the adoption of the symbol must have been – at the very least – approved by Constantine, whether or not he was the catalyst behind its use, because, as mentioned above, it takes someone with authority to be able to change the meaning of a sign. Dominant groups use signs to represent the world to reflect their own concerns and power.[69] As is evident by some of his later coin issues (see Chapter 5), this was certainly the case with Constantine. Constantine not only had imperial authority to make the chi-rho into a prominent symbol, but his connection with the Church would have been another source of authority for its creation.

Constantine's connection with the chi-rho may also have been a part of the meaning implied by the symbol, especially since signs have the power to affect reality.[70] According to Garipzanov,

> In most cases, the understanding of such [Christian] monograms relied on the viewer's knowledge of the people to whom they belonged or on some accompanying *tituli* that decoded their meaning in textual form.
>
> Garipzanov (2015), 6

Those seeing the 'Constantinian' monogram needed some knowledge of Constantine in order to interpret it as such. Not only was the symbol regularly found with images of the emperor (such as on coins), but the emperor also had the story of his vision connecting him textually with the

[69] Hodge & Kress (1988), 3.
[70] Semenenko (2012), 43. For example, in ancient Egypt, pharaohs were buried with their possessions, servants and sometimes even family members. This burial practice came about because they are "signs" of the pharaoh.

symbol.[71] The 'Constantinian' monogram would have provided a visual reminder of the power of the imperial family and their divine patron. There is the potential that viewers could have read these symbols as multivalent messages; messages of Christianity, imperial power, or both.[72] The texts of Lactantius and Eusebius would have solidified the symbol's connection with imperial power and the Constantinian rule. These texts also help scholars determine the period-specific meaning the symbols may have had for the fourth-century Roman.[73] Eusebius' text gives testament to his readers that the chi-rho is a holy symbol: a holy symbol that the imperial family commands.[74] As documented by Eusebius, the standard that Constantine first purportedly created with the chi-rho also included a portrait of the imperial family. This portrait associated the symbol with the imperial family, not only visually but also textually for those who had read Eusebius. The symbol could have evoked the rule of the imperial family to those who knew the stories surrounding the symbol's adoption. Both the chi-rho and tau-rho may have been used as tools of imperial propaganda on coins, something that will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Finally, the creation of a new sign and the connection to its intended meaning occurs over time. According to Bal and Bryson, creating a sign is a process, and signs should not be seen as *things* but as *events*. In other words, they are created at a specific time and in a concrete situation.[75] Their meaning, however, grows in its connection to the sign over time as the sign becomes more popular and is used more frequently by the sign-using group. Therefore, if the chi-rho did not initially stand for Christ, it may have gradually acquired that meaning during the

[71] See Chapter 4.
[72] There are different ways the "message" of the symbol could be read. For example, a coin with an image of an emperor holding a *labarum* and a globe surmounted by Victory with the legend RESTITVTOR REIP may convey that the emperor, a Christian, is the restorer of the republic. Alternatively, the iconography may suggest that the emperor is the restorer of the republic because of the favour granted to him because he is Christian. In the second instance, Christianity has a more active role in securing the emperor's Victory.
[73] Meredith (2011), 8.
[74] Meredith (2011), 10.
[75] Bal & Bryson (1991), 194.

course of the fourth century as the symbol was employed more and more frequently. Since history determines which ideologies are dominant, art must be considered within its historical context.[76] While the historical background in which the sign was deployed can help us decipher its intended message, the historical use of the sign should not necessarily dictate how the sign was being used in any context.[77] Appropriating a symbol's design does not necessitate the concomitant appropriation of the symbol's meaning.[78] The historical use of the sign is important, but, as mentioned above, meaning can be altered under the right set of circumstances. What a sign has historically stood for might not apply to its later meaning. Therefore, we must consider all factors when determining the meaning of a particular sign. With this in mind, I will now turn to the practical application of the preceding discussion of semiotics by detailing the scope and limitations of my data collection.

2.2.2 Scope and Limitations

Before I discuss the scope and limitations of my study, it is prudent to first define what I mean by chi-rho and tau-rho. For the purposes of this study, a chi-rho will only be considered a chi-rho if it has a rho (P) placed over a chi (X). Thus, the symbol must have a loop, facing right, above six 'arms' extending out below it towards the north, north-east, south-east, south, south-west, and north-west. On the other hand, a tau-rho will only be considered a tau-rho if it features a rho (P) placed over a tau (T). Therefore, the symbol must have a loop, facing right, above four 'arms' extending out below it towards the north, east, south, and west. As we will encounter throughout this dissertation, these basic criteria are found in various iterations, such as mirrored, backwards, or with additional components (such as an additional horizontal arm). Any

[76] Hadjinicolaou (1978), 187.
[77] Bal & Bryson (1991), 206.
[78] Bal & Bryson (1991), 207.

differences from the criteria outlined above will be discussed as they occur and only if they are relevant examples that further our understanding of the symbols.

In order to determine how the ancient viewer interpreted the chi-rho and tau-rho, the objects examined must be carefully chosen to provide the most comprehensive information on sign-user background, cultural background, and context. Since it is impossible to know the personal background of each individual sign-user, it is crucial to gather as much information as possible on the cultural background and context of the objects. At the same time, since there is a plethora of material available to examine, there needs to be a limit placed on the type of data selected. Therefore, I will primarily examine fourth-century instances of the chi-rho and tau-rho on coins and in inscriptions.

There are several reasons why I chose these two categories of objects to examine these symbols. The first is that when they are examined in conjuction inscriptions and coins can indicate how the symbols were used in different contexts (religious/secular; portable/non-portable) and in different cultures (Latin/Greek; eastern/western). As mentioned above, a fourth-century 'pagan' soldier seeing a chi-rho on a coin minted in the east with the emperor's image might interpret the meaning differently than a fourth-century Christian aristocrat viewing the symbol on an epitaph in the catacombs of Priscilla in Rome.

Secondly, both coins and inscriptions – at least those with consular dates – can be dated with some certainty. Since I am interested in determining how the chi-rho and tau-rho were used in the fourth century, I can limit the scope of my data collection to coins and inscriptions that have been dated to that century with accuracy. Although this manner of precise dating is often not possible for other groups of artefacts, subsequent chapters will include discussions of other

types of objects that have been generally dated – by scholarly consensus – to the fourth century to create a more comprehensive picture of the use of the two symbols.

Since the cultural background of the sign-user is another factor that will aid in determining how these symbols were used in antiquity, it is also important to determine the provenance of the objects being studied. Although coins could travel throughout the empire, the mint-marks issued on them can tell us precisely where they were initially minted. Therefore, coins can indicate how the chi-rho and tau-rho were deployed in different parts of the empire. Inscriptions, especially those not easily transportable, can also indicate the popularity of the symbols and the contexts in which they are found in different areas of the empire.

Finally, both coins and inscriptions have been thoroughly studied by scholars, and, therefore, a respectable collection of corpora has been compiled throughout the last few centuries. The *Roman Imperial Coinage* (*RIC*) is a ten-volume collection of the coins minted between the Battle of Actium (31 BCE) and the end of the reigns of Romulus Augustulus in the West (476 CE) and Zeno in the East (491 CE). My dissertation will focus on the coins found in volumes seven to nine, from the reigns of the Constantinian dynasty to the Theodosian dynasty.

There are three collections of inscriptions that are particularly important for my study. The first is the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (*CIL*), a comprehensive corpus of Latin inscriptions from throughout the Roman Empire. All volumes of the *CIL* will be consulted, with a focus on finding inscriptions datable to the fourth century with either the chi-rho or the tau-rho. The volumes of the *Inscriptiones Graecae Christianae Veteres Occidentis* (*IGCVO*) will be used to supplement the inscriptions found in the *CIL*. In addition, all of the inscriptions from the ten volumes of the *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae* (*ICUR*) will be included in my compendium of data. Inscriptions from other sources, such as recent editions of journals, will

supplement the epigraphs from these corpora, but only if they are significant for furthering my analysis of the symbols.

Despite the benefits of focusing on these two categories of objects, there are several limitations to focusing mainly on coins and epigraphs. For epigraphs especially, the majority of scholarship has focused on Rome and its surrounding environs. This emphasis on Rome might skew my results and could influence my interpretation of the meaning of the signs by limiting the cultural background of the ancient sign-user to one specific area of the empire. Secondly, while coins and inscriptions are datable and can be situated to a specific locality with some certainty, they might not give us an idea of how non-elite Romans would have interacted with and used these symbols compared to the elite. With the possible exception of gold coins, which would have only been available to the elite, it is difficult to determine the wealth and status of those encountering the symbols on these objects. Finally, limiting my study to the examination of coins and epigraphs artificially narrows the scope of objects in which the average Roman could have encountered these symbols. Therefore, in the final chapters of this dissertation, I expand my scope to include a discussion of other objects – generally dated to the fourth century – to reduce potential bias based on object type.

2.3 Concluding Observations

This chapter began with a quote from Pierce contemplating the pervasiveness of signs in the universe. However, it was not the omnipresence of signs that amazed Pierce but their need for interpretation. We encounter and decode thousands of signs throughout the day, and yet rarely (usually unless we encounter a sign we do not understand) do we perceive that we are doing so.

We rely on signs to convey meaning, and one area where signs are prevalent is art. In their description of how works of art are viewed, Bal and Bryson reach the following conclusion:

> Singular events occur at only one point in space and time: the guest at the country house party was murdered in the library; the Magna Carta was written in 1215; the painting was autographed and framed. But signs are by definition repeatable. They enter into a plurality of contexts; works of art are constituted by different viewers in different ways at different times and places. The production of signs entails a fundamental split between the enunciation and the enunciated: not only between the person, the subject of enunciation, and what is enunciated; but between the circumstances of enunciation and what is enunciated, which can never coincide.
>
> Bal and Bryson (1991), 179

This chapter has demonstrated the importance of gathering as much evidence as possible when reconstructing the possible meaning of symbols. No matter how we try to enter the mind of the ancient viewer and interpret art in the context in which it was created, we also use our own gaze when examining symbols.[79] This bias creates a pessimistic attitude toward the study of signs and brings into question whether contemplating the Roman mindset is a realistic endeavour. In fact, Bal and Bryson see difficulty in the ability and relevance of scholars trying to get into the mindset of the viewer, whether ancient or modern.[80] Nevertheless, the arguments made throughout this chapter demonstrate that while there are many factors to consider before meaning can be determined, it is not a futile effort. All that is needed is a careful examination of the context and the culture in which the symbol exists. The mind of the sign-user cannot be accessed but should be remembered when attempting to interpret fourth-century symbols.

[79] Elsner (2007), xiv.
[80] Bal & Bryson (1991), 204.

PART II

THE EVIDENCE

CHAPTER THREE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'CONSTANTINIAN' MONOGRAM BEFORE THE BATTLE OF THE MILVIAN BRIDGE

> *When a new movement wants a powerful symbol, it usually finds satisfaction in reviving one of the primordial symbols rather than in inventing a new one, and we presume that this happens because an old symbol has an inherent symbolic power of some kind at least dormant in itself, even when it seems to have become a purely decorative device.*
>
> Goodenough (1992), 47

****

This chapter explores the early development and possible origins of the chi-rho and tau-rho as symbols in antiquity. It attempts to determine how these symbols might have evolved into the forms they came to have by the fourth century. It also examines the use of the symbols in pre-Constantinian contexts before one (or both) of the symbols became the 'Constantinian' monogram and the saving sign of Christ. Finally, this chapter outlines how both 'pagans' and Christians deployed the symbols on objects before they were adopted and utilized by Constantine and his dynasty.

The evidence I present throughout this chapter comes from different types of material objects found across the Roman Empire and, thus, it is widely diverse. Nevertheless, the objects all share the commonality of being – at least potentially – pre-Constantinian. Scholars have used these examples as positive proof for the pre-Constantinian use of the chi-rho and tau-rho. Therefore, they offer valuable discussion points towards the development of the symbols before the fourth century. However, before delving into these topics, I will begin by touching briefly on the typology of the so-called Christ monograms.

3.1 THE THREE SO-CALLED 'CHRIST MONOGRAMS'

In 1925, Sulzberger wrote an article titled *Le symbole de la croix et les monogrammes de Jésus chez les premiers Chrétiens*, which considers the initial use of the cross and other monograms of Christ during the development of Christianity.[1] In the article, he states that there are three standard varieties of symbols, all of which were used by early Christians to reference Christ: the iota-chi, the chi-rho, and the tau-rho.[2] Since these signs were applied to various objects to symbolize Jesus, they are often simply called christograms.[3] As a result of his examination of these three symbols, Sulzberger determined that the iota-chi – a six-sided star (✳) forming a monogram of the name Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (Jesus Christ) through the combination of the Greek letters I and X – occurs on objects the most infrequently. Despite its intermittent use, Sulzberger concludes that it is the *only* pre-Constantinian symbol of the three and that its use in Christian contexts is attested to the earliest.[4] I question the validity of his conclusion, however, as the iota-chi's resemblance to a six-sided star, a symbol prevalent in ancient ('pagan') imagery, would make any secure identification of the symbol with an intentional Christian meaning nearly impossible. Indeed, Sulzberger himself admits that it is difficult to determine, even on those inscriptions undoubtedly identified as Christian, if the presence of a six-sided star is meant to refer to Christ or if it is merely being used as a decorative element.[5] Perhaps the six-sided star could have held other, celestial, connotations: a device without religious specificity. Without

[1] Sulzberger's influential analysis of the three Christ monograms is being used here as an introduction to the subject, especially as his article is often cited by secondary sources that discuss the symbols. This section on Sulzberger is supplemented throughout the rest of the chapter with more recent scholarship.
[2] Sulzberger (1925), 393.
[3] Hurtado (2006a), 135.
[4] Sulzberger (1925), 393.
[5] Sulzberger (1925), 394-395. Furthermore, Sulzberger states that often the iota-chi should simply be viewed as a star, rather than having any specific symbolic reference to Jesus Christ. However, there are cases in the fourth century when the six-sided star appears in clearly Christian epitaphs, such as *ICUR* 1984. For more information on the iota-chi, see also Bruun (1963), 155; and Finegan (1969), 232.

being able to establish whether or not an iota-chi was intended behind the employment of the symbol, it cannot be taken for granted that it is the earliest of the 'Christ monograms' to be used among Christians. Because of the complexities surrounding this symbol – and since it is not a 'Constantinian' monogram – my dissertation will not include an analysis of the iota-chi.

The chi-rho (☧) – a combination of the first two Greek letters of the word Χριστός (Christ) – was, according to Sulzberger, used by Christians extremely frequently, but not before the beginning of the fourth century.[6] This increase in the occurrence of the chi-rho in Christian contexts likely would have happened sometime after 312 CE when Constantine first appropriated the symbol as his talisman before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. Sulzberger also mentions that the chi-rho was used by ancient Greeks, often on their currency, either as an abbreviation of the name of the coinage or the moniker of the issuer,[7] a topic that will be explored below in further detail.

The third of the three symbols, the tau-rho (Ꝑ), derives from the Greek word σταυρός (cross). It is, according to Sulzberger, the latest amongst the three Christ monograms to develop and is not attested to in the material evidence until the middle of the fourth century.[8] Since Sulzberger categorizes the tau-rho as a combination of the simple cross and the chi-rho – the reason why the tau-rho is also sometimes called a monogrammed cross – it could not have existed prior to the creation of the chi-rho.[9] However, as I will argue in Chapter 4, this is the

[6] Sulzberger (1925), 393. According to Sulzberger, the chi-rho is found most frequently in Italy. This topic will be explored in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.
[7] Sulzberger (1925), 397.
[8] Sulzberger (1925), 393. According to Sulzberger, the tau-rho is found most frequently in the east. This will be explored in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.
[9] Sulzberger (1925), 393. To quote Sulzberger, "*le monogramme cruciforme ou croix monogrammatique ☩, combinaison de la croix simple et du monogramme constantanien*" (The cruciform monogram or monogrammed cross, a combination of the simple cross and the Constantinian monogram). Several recent scholars disagree with Sulzberger assessment of the order in which the 'Christ monograms' first appeared (see Breytenbach & Zimmerman 2017: 15-16; Hurtado 2006b: 215; and Tilghman 2011, 296).

symbol that Lactantius is describing when he details the events surrounding Constantine's vision. Should Sulzberger's analysis of the use of the symbol amongst early Christians be correct, it would be impossible for Lactantius to reference a tau-rho in *De Mortibus Persecutorum* (44.5) since the symbol would have been unknown at the time he was writing.

Despite his belief in the late appearance of the tau-rho on objects, Sulzberger nonetheless mentions an inscription from Egypt dating from the middle of the third century, which contains the symbol flanked by the Greek letters alpha and omega.[10] In order to adapt this early use of the tau-rho into his argument, he concludes that the symbol, along with the alpha and omega that flank it, must have been added to the inscription at a later date. If this argument can be used in this particular case, there is no reason why the same argument cannot be applied to early uses of the iota-chi as found in similar inscriptions. In this way, Sulzberger changes the data to fit his theory rather than developing a theory to fit the data. There is now further, more reliable evidence that the tau-rho was not the latest of the 'Christ monograms' to develop, but rather it was the earliest. I examine this premise in further detail below.

At the end of his evaluation of the symbols, Sulzberger concludes, "as a general rule, we find neither crosses, nor monograms of Jesus, nor representations of the Passion before the fourth century."[11] I have already suggested that Sulzberger's assessment of the 'Christ monograms' was incorrect and that both the chi-rho and tau-rho originated prior to their appropriation by Constantine. This early development is not to say that Constantine did not employ the symbol – as we will see throughout this dissertation, the chi-rho in particular – for his own specific purposes and use it in a way that gave it a new meaning, as touched upon briefly in Chapter 2.

[10] Sulzberger (1925), 401. The inscription has been dated to the third century based on the style of the script being used. See also Black (1970), 320.
[11] "En règle generale, on ne trouve ni croix, ni monogrammes de Jésus, ni représentations de la Passion avant le quatrième siècle" (Sulzberger 1925: 371).

Indeed, the chi-rho certainly became more prevalent in Roman art after Constantine, even though he was not the originator of the monogram.[12] Before discussing this in more detail, I will explore the possible origins of these symbols.

3.2 Potential Non-Christian Origins of the 'Constantinian' Monogram

Both the chi-rho and the tau-rho appear on objects dated earlier than when Constantine adopted them and, therefore, they were not an invention of the fourth century. As we shall see, they were already in use for centuries before Constantine appropriated them. There are different hypotheses on which factors influenced the development of these symbols, and these factors will now be considered in-depth. Since there is some overlap in how the symbols developed, especially if they were influenced by Egyptian or Jewish traditions, I will examine the chi-rho and tau-rho together. I will not discuss the symbols separately until the section on Greek/'pagan' influence when a more evident division of the apparent use of each symbol becomes evident.

3.2.1 Egyptian Influence

One of the most popular theories about the origins of the 'Constantinian' monogram involves its stylistic similarities to the Egyptian symbol for life, the ankh (☥). While the chi-rho has also been linked stylistically to the ankh, it is the tau-rho, in particular, around which this theory revolves.[13] From a purely aesthetic standpoint, the ankh is very comparable in design to the tau-rho (Ꝑ), as both symbols feature a rounded top above a t-shaped cross. Further strengthening the connection between the two symbols, the t-shaped cross, already a component of its design may

[12] Black (1970), 319.
[13] See, for instance, Bardill (2012), 166; de Savignac (1963), 50-52; Dinkler (1951), 171; Finegan (1969), 234-255; and Lewis (2003), 27. For information on the similarities between the chi-rho and the ankh, see Frakes (2006), 104.

have contributed to the ankh's appropriation as a Christian symbol.[14] The Christian equivalent of the ankh is known as the *crux ansata,* or handled cross. It differs only slightly from the ankh: the circle at the top of the symbol is round and not elongated.[15] While it is difficult to prove any direct correlation between the two symbols, a few intriguing pieces of evidence could point to a common source from which the tau-rho and the *crux ansata* derived.

Figure 3.1 A Christian *stela* from Armant, Egypt. It features two chi-rhos, a tau-rho, and a *crux ansata* below the Greek inscription. 4th – 6th century CE.
Keene (1891), Plate XI. Image in public domain.

One of the artefacts supporting this theory is a Christian inscription from Armant in Egypt, dated between the fourth and sixth centuries (see **Figure 3.1**).[16] There are four symbols at the bottom of the inscription: a tau-rho and a cross ankh (*crux ansata)* flanked by two chi-rhos. The connection between the two symbols in a Christian context, along with their visual

[14] Milburn (1988), 285.
[15] Bardill (2012), 166-168; and Finegan (1969), 255. Bardill (2012: 168) argues that Christians in Egypt may have adopted the *crux ansata* before the middle of the fourth century. For an image of the *crux ansata,* see Figure 3.1. Spalding-Stracey (2020: 93-95) disagrees with the notion that the *crux ansata* is derived from the *ankh,* and, although there is a substantial visual similarity between the two, it is not a continuation of traditional ancient Egyptian belief in Christian Egypt.
[16] Finegan (1969), 258; and Lefebvre (1907), n° 423. According to Finegan, the inscription was purportedly found at Armant, ancient Hermonthis, a town on the west bank of the Nile.

similarities, might imply a link between the two symbols.[17] However, I contend that the symbols' presence together in one inscription does not necessitate a correlation between the two. It certainly does not signify that one symbol was derived from the other. In contrast, the presence of the chi-rho, tau-rho, and cross ankh on the same object might instead indicate that the ancient viewer interpreted the three symbols differently, and that is why all appear together on this inscription.

Another artefact connecting the ankh to Christianity is the manuscript of the *Gospel of Truth* that is a part of the Jung Codex from the Nag Hammadi collection. On the last page of the manuscript, which likely dates to the mid-second century and originates from the Valentinian – named after the Egyptian philosopher Valentinus – school of Gnostic Christian philosophy in Rome, there is an ankh.[18] Another section of the codex features a tau-rho (see **Figure 3.2**).[19] The use of the two symbols together in the same manuscript, a Christian manuscript nonetheless, does provide further evidence that the two symbols could be used simultaneously and were not mutually exclusive. Once again, however, the manuscript does not provide proof that the tau-rho derived from the ankh. It only supports the notion of the eventual Christian appropriation of both symbols.

[17] See Bardill (2012), 166-181; and Hurtado (2006a), 143. While Hurtado presents this information, he does not himself believe that the presence of the two symbols together on this inscription should indicate that the tau-rho was a derivative of the ankh.
[18] de Savignac (1963), 52. For more on the *Gospel of Truth*, see Kalvesmaki (2013), 29-31. See also the discussion of numerical symbolism in the *Magical Aspects of the Symbols* section below.
[19] Finegan (1969), 255.

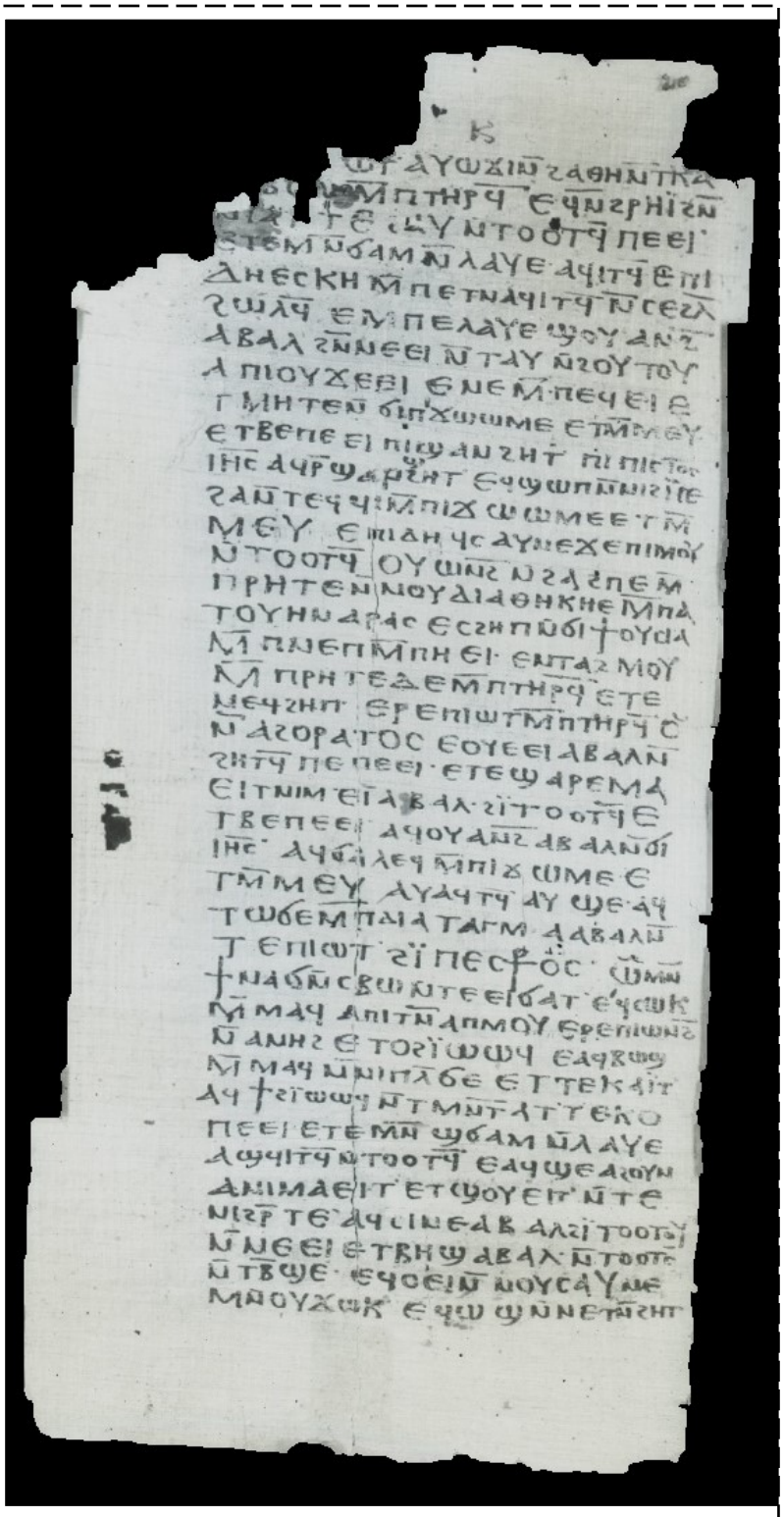

Figure 3.2 A page from the *Gospel of Truth* from the Jung Codex series (Codex I, papyrus page 20) found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt. The text features both an ankh and a tau-rho. Middle of the 2nd century CE. © Honnold Mudd Library Special Collections (I, 20).

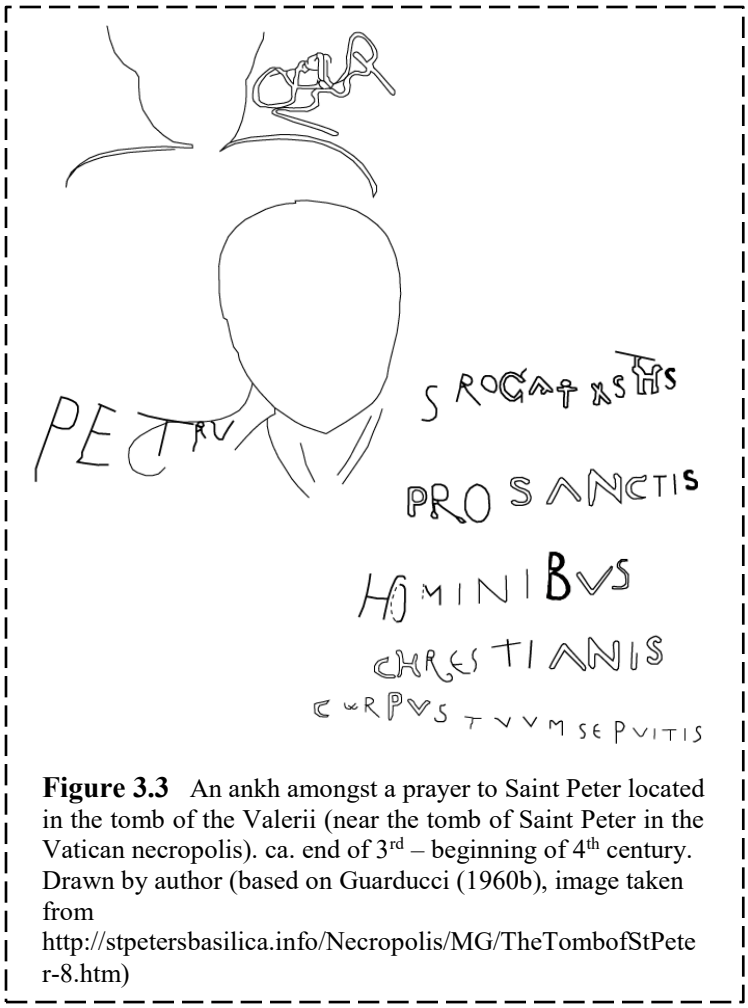

Figure 3.3 An ankh amongst a prayer to Saint Peter located in the tomb of the Valerii (near the tomb of Saint Peter in the Vatican necropolis). ca. end of 3rd – beginning of 4th century. Drawn by author (based on Guarducci (1960b), image taken from http://stpetersbasilica.info/Necropolis/MG/TheTombofStPeter-8.htm)

Finally, the third piece of evidence suggesting that early Christians appropriated the ankh as a religious symbol has been found amongst the Vatican graffiti near the tomb of Saint Peter. The symbol was discovered in a mausoleum, the tomb of the Valerii (Tomb H). It is associated with a prayer to Saint Peter, dated to the late third or early fourth centuries (see **Figure 3.3**).[20] The prayer, which is located to the right of busts of Peter and Christ, is as follows:

PETRYC ROGA ☥ XS HIS
PRO SANC(TI)S
HOM(INI)BVS
CHRESTIANIS AD
CO(R)PVS TVVM SEP(VLTIS)

[20] Guarducci (1960a), 141 and 145-146.

Peter, pray for the pious Christian men buried near your body[21]

The first line of the inscription also has the abbreviated words for Jesus (HIS) Christ (XS), and an ankh.[22] However, there are no representations of tau-rhos or chi-rhos found nearby, even though chi-rhos have been found elsewhere around the tomb of Saint Peter.[23] Once more, the ankh is found in a Christian context. As with the other two examples, there is little reason – except for the ankh being a more ancient symbol – to conclude that either of the so-called 'Christ monograms' developed from this Egyptian symbol.

The above discussion suggests that while there are some reasons to support a connection between the Egyptian ankh – in the form of the *crux ansata* – and Christianity in general, the evidence is too insufficient to demonstrate any clear correlation between the ankh and either the chi-rho or tau-rho.[24] Furthermore, Hurtado argues that the link between the 'Constantinian' monograms (whether the chi-rho or the tau-rho) and the ankh developed after Constantine had already adopted the symbols. Based on chronology, Hurtado argues against the appropriation of the ankh for use in Christian art. Rather, he thinks that the *crux ansata* derived from its similarity with the tau-rho and not the other way around.[25] In other words, the ankh came to be used as a Christian symbol because it resembled the tau-rho, which Christians were already using at the time. While this hypothesis is also challenging to prove, the sparse evidence that exists suggests, as I shall discuss below, that it is as likely as the tau-rho originating from the ankh.

[21] Both the Latin text and the English translation are taken from Guarducci (1960a), 146.
[22] Guarducci (1960a), 146.
[23] Such as on Wall G, which will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 6. See Guarducci (1960a), 102-125.
[24] Aland (1967), 179.
[25] Hurtado (2006a), 145.

3.2.2 Jewish Influence

Another theory that scholars have put forward is that the tau-rho (and other Christ monograms) developed from the Hebrew-Jewish tradition.[26] One argument contends that the abbreviation of χριστός and σταυρός is connected to the Jewish veneration of divine names.[27] In Jewish manuscripts, divine names are written cautiously, possibly because of concern surrounding the sanctity of the name.[28] In the same way, Christian scribes, apprehensive about the sanctity of certain words, might have established certain scribal abbreviations that became the 'Christ monograms.' Christian scribal practices, and the veneration of divine names, will be discussed further in the *nomina sacra* section below.

A second hypothesis postulates that the symbols derive from linguistic similarities with the Hebrew alphabet. In particular, Dinkler compares the cross, either upright (+) or on its side (x), to the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the Taw (ת).[29] This comparison comes from the Hebrew prophet Ezekiel, who states,[30]

> And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.
>
> Ezekiel, 9:4

In Hebrew, the word for mark is Taw.[31] Since the Taw in Paleo-Hebrew resembles an upright or sideways cross, it was chosen as the sign to be marked on the foreheads of the chosen men

[26] Aland (1967), 179; Black (1970), 324; and Dinkler (1951), 163-170. Black gives a detailed summary of the arguments supporting the Jewish origins for the 'Christ monograms.'
[27] Gamble (1995), 75; and Hurtado (1998), 662-664. Brown (1970: 7-12) disagrees with this supposition, noting that the *nomina sacra* do not simply omit vowels, as in the Jewish tradition, nor should we assume that omitting vowels in the Jewish tradition has anything to do with divine veneration since it is common Jewish scribal practice to omit the vowels of all words. Indeed, the *nomina sacra* practice might have less to do with Jewish pronunciation practices and more to do with Christian scribal practices, which is discussed in more detail below. Furthermore, Hurtado (2018: 124) points out that we do not find any of the *nomina sacra* as they are written in Christian manuscripts in any surviving indisputable Jewish manuscripts.
[28] Wilkinson (2015), 87.
[29] Dinkler (1951), 163. See also Schmidt (1995), 76-78. The letter is also called the Tav or Tau.
[30] The English translation is taken from Redpath (1907), 41.
[31] Finegan (1969), 223-233.

mentioned by Ezekiel.[32] Therefore, the word for mark came to symbolize the mark itself. The Christian theologian Origen, writing in the middle of the third century CE, quotes this passage of Ezekiel. In the context of asking three Jewish men about what they can tell him about the Jewish Taw, he writes,[33]

> *Τρίτος δέ τις φάσκων, τῶν καὶ εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν πεπιστευκότων, ἔλεγε τὰ ἀρχαῖα στοιχεῖα ἐμφερὲς ἔχειν τὸ θαῦ τῷ τοῦ σταυροῦ χαρακτῆρι, καὶ προφητεύεσθαι περὶ τοῦ γενομένου ἐν Χριστιανοῖς ἐπὶ τοῦ μετώπου σημείου· ὅπερ ποιοῦσιν οἱ πεπιστευκότες πάντες οὐτινοσοῦν προκαταρχόμενοι πράγματος, καὶ μάλιστα ἢ εὐχῶν ἢ ἁγίων ἀναγνωσμάτων.*
>
> Then the third one of the speakers, among those who also put their faith in Christ, said that the old alphabet (elements of language) has a Taw similar to the mark of the cross, and there was a prophecy among the Christians about the sign, which was placed on their forehead; the very sign which all believers make for whatsoever deed when they begin it, and especially when reading either prayers or devotions.
>
> Ori. *Eze.* 9

In this passage, Origen makes the connection between the Taw and the cross much more explicit. Origen is told that the cross is similar to the Taw of the ancient Hebrew alphabet and that Christians will make the sign of the cross before they perform certain deeds, like prayers. For Origen, at least, the one symbol may have derived from the other. But although there is mention in the ancient sources of a link between the paleo-Hebrew Taw and the cross, this is not indicative of a connection between the 'Christ monograms' and the Taw. For this, we must turn to another Christian author.

[32] Cooke (2015), 106-107. The Taw is a mark (in the shape of a cross) that was branded on animals' necks and also a signature used in place of a name for illiterates (Gesenius 1857: 857). The Taw derives from the Phoenician alphabetic system, which is itself connected to Egyptian hieroglyphics. For more information, see also Driver (1954), particularly Figures 81 and 97.

[33] The Greek text is taken from the J. P. Migne (1857) edition of Origen. For more information on this passage, see also Finegan (1969), 229; Hurtado (2006a), 148; and Longenecker (2015), 54.

Tertullian, a Christian author from Carthage, writing slightly before Origen, makes a similar connection, also quoting the passage from Ezekiel, although he compares the Greek letter Tau – and the Latin 'T' – to a cross. He says,[34]

> *Praemittens itaque, et subiungens proinde, passum etiam Christum, aeque iustos eius eadem passuros tam apostolos quam et deinceps omnes fideles prophetavit, signatos illa nota scilicet de qua Ezechiel:* Dicit dominus ad me, Pertransi in medio portae in media Hierusalem, et da signum Tau in frontibus virorum. *Ipsa est enim littera Graecorum Tau, nostra autem T, species crucis, quam portendebat futuram in frontibus nostrus apud veram et catholicam Hierusalem…*
>
> So by setting it down first, and repeating it in like terms afterwards, that even Christ has suffered, he prophesied that his righteous ones too would have the same sufferings, first the apostles, and afterwards all the faithful, sealed with that mark of which Ezekiel speaks: *The Lord said unto me, Pass through the midst of the gate in the midst of Jerusalem, and set the mark TAU on the foreheads of the men* [emphasis added]. For this same letter TAU of the Greeks, which is our T, has the appearance of the cross, which he foresaw we should have on our foreheads in the true and catholic Jerusalem…
>
> Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 3.22

According to Tertullian, the Greek Tau – and subsequently the Latin 'T' – derives from the Hebrew Taw, which, as already mentioned, in paleo-Hebrew was formed in the shape of a cross or placed sideways like an X.[35] It follows, therefore, that the symbol that uses a Tau (the tau-rho) as a part of its composition might have developed from this linguistic connection. Hurtado conjectures that the Christian adoption of the tau-rho might have been inspired by the connection between the Greek Tau, which is a part of the symbol's composition, and the cross.[36] Additionally, according to Finegan, the chi (X) was also considered an equivalent to the Taw.[37] This equivalency is significant, as I believe that it might indicate that the chi-rho was also

[34] Both the Latin text and English translation are taken from the E. Evans (1972) edition of *Tertullian: Adversus Marcionem*.
[35] See also Dinkler (1951: 170) and Finegan (1969: 343) for more on the connection between the Hebrew Taw and the Greek Tau.
[36] Hurtado (2006a), 148.
[37] Finegan (1969), 343.

developed out of this association with the paleo-Hebrew alphabet. The relationship between the tau and the cross is further elucidated in the section on the magical aspects of the symbols below.

Both the tau-rho, formed partially with a cross shape, and the chi-rho, formed partially with the shape of a cross on its side, might derive from the aforementioned Jewish tradition. There is material evidence from Jewish inscriptions that might indicate that both the chi-rho and tau-rho originated from these 'signs of Jahweh.'[38] One example comes from the inscription on the Nicanor ossuary, found near the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. The text has three lines of Greek followed by a line of Hebrew (see **Figure 3.4**).[39] Below the inscription, there is a cross-mark placed on its side. This ossuary likely dates to the latter part of the Herodian period (30-50 CE), and it was made for Nicanor of Alexandria, famous for being a donor of one of the gates of the nearby Jewish temple.[40] There are several examples of this type of sign appearing in Jewish contexts, most of which are funerary. As Finnegan notes, this usage of the Taw appears to mark the object with a sign of salvation.[41] Here, then, we have

Figure 3.4 The Nicanor ossuary found near the Mount of Olives. A cross mark appears below three lines of Hebrew text. ca. 30–50 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 126395)

[38] Black (1970), 324-326.
[39] Finegan (1969), 237.
[40] See Finegan (1969), 237; and Meyers (1971), 49-50.
[41] Finegan (1969), 234. See also Finegan (1969: 235-249) for various Jewish examples.

evidence of the Hebrew Taw being used as an apotropaic sign, a protective device, which might have influenced the development of both the chi-rho and the tau-rho.

As with my objections to the Egyptian origins of the symbols, it is difficult to prove that one symbol developed from the other with any certainty. There is, however, a stronger argument for Jewish influence on the development of the symbols as the Taw is explicitly connected to the cross in Origen and the Greek Tau in Tertullian. Here we have a more linear development of the sign and its potential adaptation by Christians based on linguistic similarities rather than stylistic resemblances alone. Furthermore, the examples given in the primary sources pre-date the use of the symbols in the fourth century, which provides a stronger case for Jewish influence on the development of the symbols before their adoption by Constantine.

3.2.3 Non-Religious Greek Influence

We now turn to the non-religious Greek influence on the symbols. Since both the chi-rho and the tau-rho were used as Greek monograms before the fourth century, each symbol will now be explored individually.

3.2.3.a The Greek Chi-rho

The use of the chi-rho is well attested before the fourth century in 'pagan' contexts. According to Sulzberger, it was employed as an abbreviation for various Greek words that began with the letters Xρ or Pχ.[42] In particular, McNamee, in her *Abbreviations in the Greek Literary Papyri and Ostraca* (1981), clarifies that the chi-rho is found in manuscripts as a substitute for the following Greek words: χρ(ῶ) 'I attack/proclaim'; χρ(ῆσις) 'use'; χρ(ηστόν) 'useful'; and, possibly, χορ(ός) 'dance.'[43] The symbol may have also been used as an abbreviation for χρ(υσός)

[42] Sulzberger (1925), 397. See also Gardthausen (1924), 14. When used as an abbreviation for words with Pχ, the initial vowel has been dropped (for example, ἄρχων)
[43] McNamee (1981), 119. See also Hurtado (2006a), 137.

'gold' and the Greek phrase χ(ιλιά)ρ(χης), which translates as 'commander of a thousand men.'[44] In particular, though, 'pagan' scribes regularly used the symbol in the margins of manuscripts to mark certain portions of the text they were reading as important or good for quotation (χρηστόν, χρήσιμον or χρῆσις).[45] Several surviving manuscripts have examples of this scribal practice.[46] For instance, the abbreviation appears twice in the left-hand margin of a *hypomnema* (i.e. commentary) on Homer's *Iliad*, dated to the 1st century BCE (see **Figure 3.5**).[47] The chi-rho is also found as a critical mark in a manuscript of Aeschylus' *Dictyulci,* and another appears on Sophocles' *Theseus*, both dated to the 2nd century CE.[48] These critical marks – or marginalia as they are also called – could have been made by anyone literate wishing to note something on the papyrus under examination, and they signify that some scholarly attention was paid to the text.[49] Sometime between when the manuscript was initially created and when it was no longer in use, these critical marks were placed in the margins. In the same way a book can be highlighted years after it was published, the marginalia could have been added decades after scribes had copied the manuscript. Therefore, the date of these critical marks cannot be determined with any accuracy. However, it is still worth noting that the chi-rho was not being placed on the manuscript with any

[44] Avi-Yonah (1974), 112; Finegan (1969), 233; and Garipzanov (2018), 29.
[45] Fox (1986), 616; Kirsch (2004), 143; and Turner (1987), 15.
[46] This dissertation discusses several examples of the chi-rho and tau-rho in manuscripts. It is essential to remember that papyri cannot be dated with any certainty, and there is usually no consensus among scholars on dating. Nevertheless, these manuscripts offer valuable evidence for the early use of the symbols and should not be ignored. The dates I give for any manuscripts are those agreed upon by several scholars. Any disputes on dating will also be mentioned in the footnotes. For my purposes, general chronologies of before or after Constantine are sufficient to illustrate my arguments. For more information on the difficulties surrounding dating early New Testament manuscripts and how problematic it can be, see Larysse (2012) and Mazza (2019).
[47] Turner (1987), Nº 58.
[48] Turner (1987), N º 24 and Nº 27 respectively. The identity of Nº 27 as a manuscript of Sophocles is uncertain.
[49] Turner (1987), 14-15.

intended Christian meaning. These critical marks demonstrate that the symbol was used before the period of Constantine in a 'pagan' – and non-religious –context.

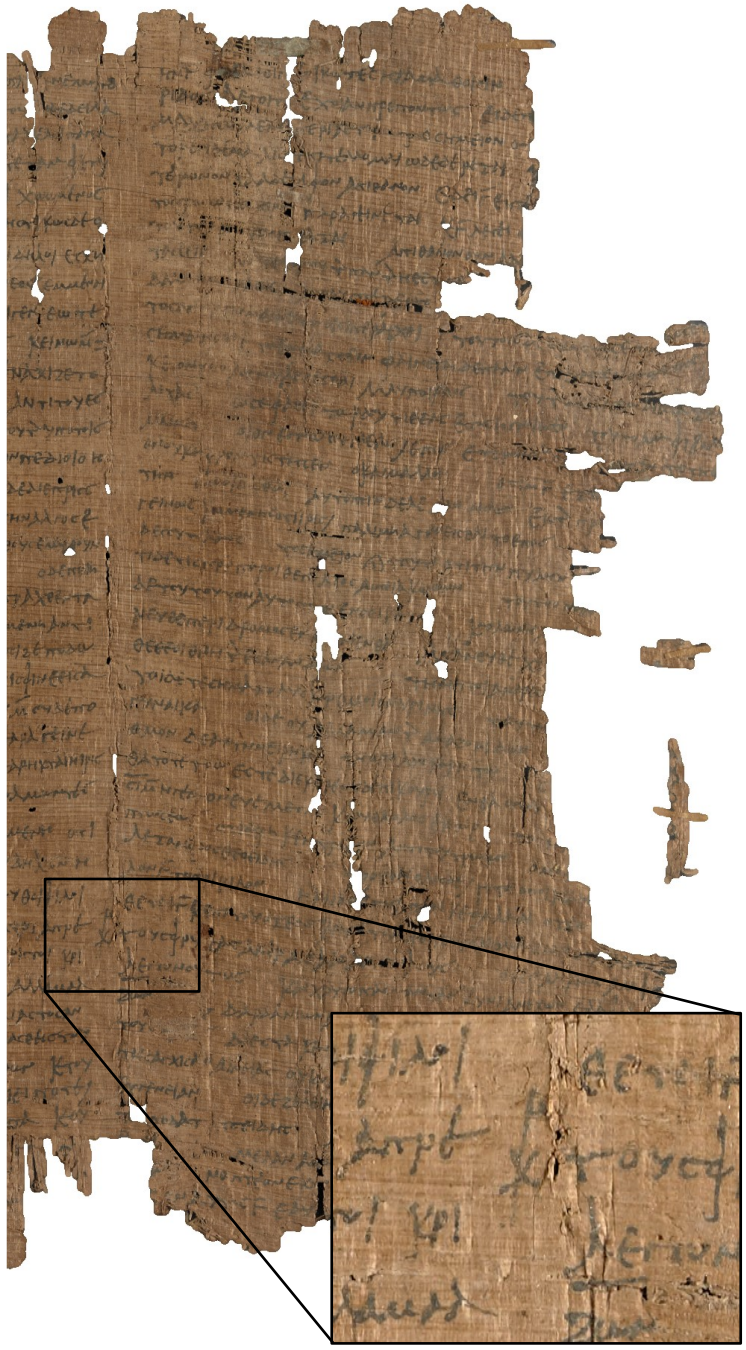

Figure 3.5 A papyrus leaf from a *hypomnema* on Homer's *Iliad* (P.Oxy VIII 1086). A chi-rho appears as a critical mark in the left hand margin of this fragment of the text. 1st century BCE.
© THE BRITISH LIBRARY (PAPYRUS 2055).

The chi-rho is also found on several pre-Constantinian coins. Usually, it appears as an abbreviation of the name of the coin or the person issuing it.[50] In other cases, it is used as a control (or mint) mark.[51] For instance, a *hemidrachm* of Ptolemy III (see **Figure 3.6**), minted in Alexandria sometime between 246 and 220 BCE, features a chi-rho between the legs of an eagle on the reverse; while the obverse has the diademed head of Zeus-Ammon.[52] The chi-rho also appears on tetradrachms from the city of Athens, the coins of the Mithradates, king of Pontus, and on a medallion issued under the emperor Trajan.[53] From the Hellenistic period into the Roman empire, the chi-rho, while not a particularly common feature, would occasionally appear on the coinage of various rulers. I would argue that these early examples – especially the coins issued under various rulers in different parts of the Greek and Roman world – indicate that the chi-rho was a versatile symbol (and at time abbreviation for various words and proper names) that could hold various meanings depending on the context in which it was deployed in the centuries prior to the fourth.

Figure 3.6 *Hemidrachm* of Ptolemy III minted in Egypt. A chi-rho appears on the coin's reverse between the legs of the eagle. ca. 246–220 BCE.
With permission of wildwinds.com, ex Triton V auction, Jan. 2002.

[50] Sulzberger (1925), 397.
[51] van Oppen de Ruiter (2015), 47.
[52] *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum (SNG) Vol VIII* 1163. Partially because of this example, López Sánchez (2016: 150-158) links the chi-rho, and subsequently the *labarum,* to Jupiter. He does this in contrast to those who link the symbol to Sol Invictus through the *Panegyric of 310 CE* (2016: 140-150).
[53] Cabrol & Leclercq (1913), 1481-1484.

In summary, the chi-rho monogram was used in various 'pagan' contexts as an abbreviation for several Greek words. Even if Christians did apply the monogram to objects prior to Constantine adopting it, the chi-rho is found more frequently in the material record in these non-religious contexts in the centuries leading up to the fourth.[54] Even disregarding the contexts in which it is found, the chi-rho is clearly not a symbol that originated spontaneously in the fourth century under Constantine. It developed as a symbol over several centuries, and it held several different meanings, the interpretation of which depended on how it was being used by the person who was using it. The reliance on the viewer's interpretation links back to the application of the theory of social semiotics, as discussed in Chapter 2. The meaning of the chi-rho is the result of the combination of sign-user background (or, as it were, intention), cultural influence, and context.

3.2.3.b The Greek Tau-rho

There is far less evidence available in the material record for the pre-Constantinian 'pagan' use of the tau-rho than the chi-rho. The tau-rho does sometimes appear as an abbreviation for the words τρ(όπος) "manner/way," τρ(ιακάς) "thirty," and the name Τρ(οκόνδας).[55] For instance, the tau-rho is minted on a series of coins issued by Tigranes, King of Armenia.[56] It is also found on the coins of King Herod, which several scholars have suggested signifies the third year of his reign, τρίτῳ ἔτει (see **Figure 3.7**).[57] Ariel and Fontanille, in their monograph on Herod's coins (2012), evaluate the hypotheses of various scholars (from the 1850s until the 1980s) on the symbol's meaning. They propose that the monogram stood for a name, possibly of the magistrate

[54] Drake (1976), 73.
[55] Avi-Yonah (1974), 105-106; and Hurtado (2006a), 138.
[56] Cabrol & Leclercq (1913), 1483. They mention the tau-rho might stand as an abbreviation of the first four letters of the capital of Armenia, Tigranocerta (ΤΙΓΡ).
[57] Finegan (1969), 234; Hurtado (2006a), 138; Kanael (1952), 264; and Kanael (1963), 48. The obverse of the coin has a tripod, and the reverse of the coin features a military helmet (see Hill 1914: 220).

Figure 3.7 Bronze coin (8 *prutot*) of Herod the Great minted in Samaria. A tau-rho appears on the obverse in the right field next to a tripod holding a *lebes*. 40 BCE.
With permission of wildwinds.com.

in charge of this series of coins.[58] Whatever its intended meaning on the coins of Herod, the tau-rho is located in the coin's field (the unmarked area between the coin's main design and legend), along the outer edge of the coin. As we shall see in Chapter 5, this is also a common location for the tau-rho on the coins of the fourth century.

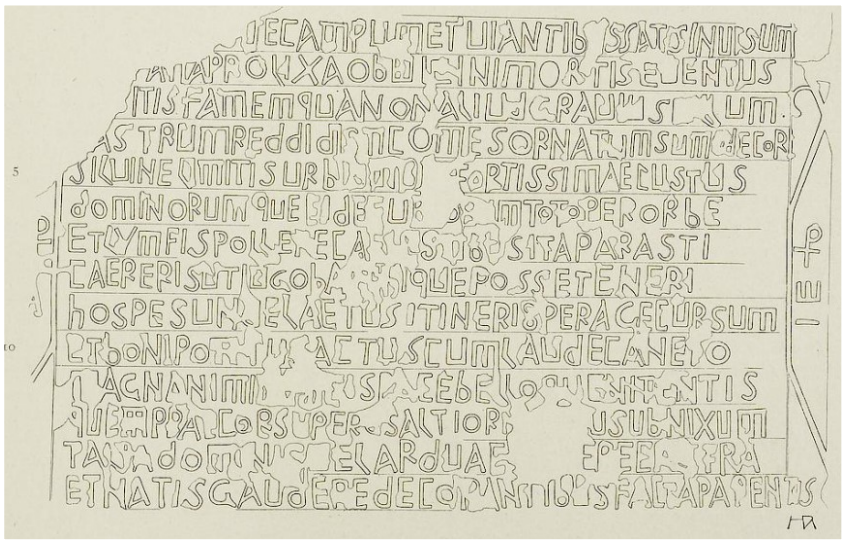

Figure 3.8 An honorific inscription from a Roman military camp at Khan El-Abyad, Syria (*CIL III* 6660 = *ILCV* 798). A tau-rho appears on each side of the inscription between an alpha and an omega. ca. end of 3rd – beginning of 4th century.
Taken from Kalinka (1900), 34. Image in public domain

Aside from these coins, there is one other possible pre-fourth-century 'pagan' example of a tau-rho, in an inscription from the Roman camp at Khan El-Abyad, Syria (see **Figure 3.8**). The

[58] Ariel & Fontanille (2012), 125-126.

honorific inscription dates to the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century[59] and reads:

> *[siccum utiq]ue campum et viantib[u]s sat[i]s inuisum | [ob sp]a[t]ia prolixa, ob uicini mortis euentus | [sort]itis famem, qua non aliud grav[ius ul]lum, | [c]astrum reddidisti, comes, ornatum sumo (=summo) decore, | Siluine, limitis urb[is muro] fortissimae custus (=custos), | dominorumque fide cu[lt]o[ru]m toto per orbe | e[t] lymfis pollere ca[ele]s[ti]b[u]s ita parasti, | Caereris ut iugo Ba[cchi]que posse teneri. | Hospes un[d]e laetus itineris perage cursum | et boni potitu[s l]aetus cum laude caneto | magnanimi [iudi]cis pace belloque nitentis | quem praecor superos altiori [grad]u subnixum | talia dominis [u]el ardua c[ond]ere [cas]tra (?)| et natis gaudere deco[r]antibus facta parentis*
>
> A plain that is dry indeed, and hateful enough to wayfarers, on account of its long wastes and its chances of death close at hand, for those whose lot is hunger, than which there is no graver ill (or: where no graver ill besets), thou has made, my lord, a camp, adorned with greatest splendor. O Silvinus, warden of a city of the high-road, most strong in its wall and in the protection of our masters revered in all the world: and thou hast contrived that it abound in water celestial, so that it may bear the yoke of Ceres and of Bacchus. Wherefore, o guest, with joy pursue thy way, and for benefit received sing with praise the doings of this great-hearted judge who shines in peace and in war. I pray the gods above that he, taking a step still higher, may continue to found for our masters such camps, arduous though they be, and that he may rejoice in children who add honour to their father's deeds.[60]
>
> *CIL III* 6660 = *ILCV* 798

This inscription is the earliest example of either the chi-rho or the tau-rho being used in connection with the alpha and omega, which were solely Christian symbols. Despite this Christian connotation, there is mention of the old gods, including Ceres and Bacchus. Therefore, it is difficult to determine the intention behind the inclusion of the tau-rho on such an inscription. The fourth century – especially the early fourth century – was a time of religious negotiation (see also Chapter 4). The inclusion of the tau-rho (with alpha and omega) may have functioned as a

[59] Dodgeon & Lieu (2002: 121) date the inscription to the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century. See also Prentice (1908: 283), who states that the Syrian inscription must date before the empire was officially divided into East and West, as it would not have been written in Latin once that had occurred. Prentice speculates that the tau-rhos may have been later additions to the inscription, but since they appear within their own registers, they were clearly planned in the original design of the inscription.

[60] This translation is taken from Prentice (1908), 282-3. See also: Dodgeon & Lieu (2002), 121-122. A tau-rho appears on each side of the inscription: one above an alpha, the other above an omega.

symbol to ward away evil, something that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8. Furthermore, the inscription mentions the dryness of the land, so a reference to the produce of Ceres (food) and Bacchus (drink) need not necessarily be religious.[61] While I can only hypothesize on the intention behind the inscription, what is evident is that the tau-rho is appearing with other Christian symbols, the alpha and omega, in an inscription dated earlier than any such Christian instance with a chi-rho (see below).

While there are examples of the use of the tau-rho in non-Christian contexts, they are few. Even in the example from the Roman camp at Khan El-Abyad, the inscription may have been a blend of 'pagan' and Christian symbolism. The tau-rho was rarely employed as a 'pagan' symbol, and, certainly, it is attested too far less in the non-religious Greek material record than the chi-rho.

3.3 Potential Christian Origins of the 'Constantinian' Monogram

Having examined the pre-Constantinian development of the symbols in non-religious 'pagan' contexts, I will now discuss the evidence for the origins of both symbols in potential Christian contexts before the time of Constantine. Before exploring each symbol individually, the magical elements of both symbols and the use of the symbols as *nomina sacra* will be considered.

3.3.1 The Magical Aspects of the Symbols

Both the tau-rho and the chi-rho may have had aspects of magical significance attached to them. When Constantine first appropriated the symbol – whether it was a chi-rho or a tau-rho[62] –

[61] Bacchus and Ceres often appear in Latin poetry as references to bread and wine (see Clausen 2002, 6; Jamir 2016, 152, fn. 180; and Maccoby 1991, 125).
[62] This subject will be further expounded upon in Chapter 4.

before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, it seemed to function as a sort of talisman for him. It was, in other words, a good luck token or apotropaic sign.[63] We have already seen that the tau-rho was connected to the letter 'T' in antiquity and that, according to Tertullian, the Greek Tau was linked, at least for some Christians, to the cross. By the end of the first century CE, the cross seems to have already become a significant symbol for Christians. The epistle of Barnabas, which is dated sometime between 70 and 130 CE, remarks:[64]

> *λέγει γάρ· καὶ περιέτεμεν Ἀβραὰμ ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ ἄνδρας δεκαοκτὼ καὶ τριακοσίους. τίς οὖν ἡ δοθεῖσα αὐτῷ γνῶσις; μάθετε ὅτι τοὺς δεκαοκτὼ πρώτους, καὶ διάτημα ποιήσας λέγει τριακοσίους. τὸ δεκαοκτὼ ἰῶτα δέκα, ἦτα ὀκτώ· ἔχεις Ἰησοῦν. ὅτι δὲ ὁ σταυρὸς ἐν τῷ Τ ἤμελλεν ἔχειν τὴν χάριν, λέγει καὶ τριακοσίους. δηλοῖ οὖν τὸν μὲν Ἰησοῦν ἐν τοῖς δυσὶν γράμμασιν, καὶ ἐν τῷ ἑνὶ τὸν σταυρόν.*
>
> For it says, "Abraham circumcised eighteen and three hundred men from his household." What knowledge, then, was given to him? Notice that first he mentions the eighteen and then, after a pause, the three hundred. The number eighteen [in Greek] consists of an Iota [I], 10, and an Eta [E], 8. There you have Jesus. And because the cross was about to have grace in the letter Tau [T], he next gives three hundred, Tau. And so he shows the name Jesus by the first two letters, and the cross by the other.
>
> Epistle of Barnabas, 9:8-9

The epistle of Barnabas is significant for two reasons. First, we see that the cross was already a symbol connected with the Christian faith by the end of the first century. Secondly, we are once again presented with an association between the symbol of the cross, in the form of a letter 'T,' and the Jewish faith. The epistle of Barnabas quotes the Old Testament and, through numerical symbolism,[65] links the number of circumcised males in the household of Abraham (318) to the words Jesus Christ (18) and the cross (300). In both the epistle of Barnabas and Tertullian – who was writing over a century later – the cross is formed in the shape of a 'T.'

---

[63] Coleman (1968), 79; and Drake (1976), 73. Although Coleman is talking about the cross becoming a talisman and not the chi-rho, he is describing the symbol that Constantine used after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. See also Chapter 7 for more information on the use of the chi-rho as a talisman for the emperor Constantine.

[64] Hurtado (2006a), 147. Both the Greek text and the English translation are taken from the B. D. Ehrman (2003) edition of the Epistle of Barnabas.

[65] For more on numerical symbolism (called the practice of *isopsephy*), including the use of numbers in the theology of the Valentinian school in the second century, see Garipzanov (2018) and Kalvesmaki (2013).

The significance of the cross carried through to the fourth century. By then, it had become a symbol that had the power to make demons flee. According to Lactantius:[66]

> *Tum quidam ministrorum scientes dominum cum adsisterent immolanti, imposuerunt frontibus sius immortale signum; quo facto fugatis daemonibus sacra turbata sunt.*
>
> …he [Diocletian] was once sacrificing cattle and looking in their entrails for what was going to happen, when certain of his attendants who knew the Lord and were present at the sacrifice, placed the immortal sign on their foreheads; at this the demons were put to flight and the rites thrown into confusion.
>
> Lactant. *De Mort. Pers.* 10.2

Lactantius, who wrote during the reign of Constantine, was aware of the mystical properties of the cross and its importance in the repertoire of Christian symbols. In addition to this passage from Lactantius, Ezekiel – as mentioned above – tells us that the upright and sideways cross, as the Jewish Taw, held mystical powers. It marked the foreheads of the chosen ones; thus, it protected them. Therefore, although it is not possible to speculate how widespread the knowledge of the apotropaic function of the cross was in antiquity, its attestation in the ancient sources indicates that, at least for some, it held magical properties. It is plausible that this element of protection transferred to the tau-rho and chi-rho, which had certain characteristics in common with the Taw and the cross.

Evidence from the fourth century suggests that the tau-rho, in particular, was thought to hold magical properties. Early Christians believed that the Greek letter Tau itself held mystical meaning through its association with the cross.[67] According to Ephraem the Syrian (ca. 306-373 CE), the Rho in the tau-rho signified the word help, and thus the symbol, taken together as a whole, could mean salvation through the cross.[68] However, Hurtado cautions that this may have

[66] Both the Latin text and the English translation are taken from Creed (1984), 16-17. De Bruyn (2017: 65) states that the power of Christ's death – the salvation of humanity from the Devil – transferred over to the cross.
[67] Hurtado (2006a), 147. According to Hurtado, the Tau was a visual reference to the crucifixion of Christ.
[68] Hurtado (2006a), 149. For more information, see also Dölger (1928), 309.

been Ephraem's own personal assessment of the tau-rho – and not one shared by the average ancient viewer – since Ephraem was fond of finding spiritual symbolism of his devotion throughout the natural world.[69] Consequently, it is difficult to assess how much emphasis would have been placed on the mystical value of the tau-rho.

But despite Hurtado's caution on Ephraem's assessment, it was not only Ephraem who saw mystical allusions to the cross, at any rate, in nature. Already in the second century CE, Justin Martyr mentions the cross and its connection to the natural world in his first *Apology*. He declares,[70]

> *Θάλασσα μὲν γὰρ οὐ τέμνεται, ἢν μὴ τοῦτο τὸ τρόπαιον, ὃ καλεῖται ἱστίον, ἐν τῇ νηὶ σῶον μείνῃ· γῆ δὲ οὐκ ἀροῦται ἄνευ αὐτοῦ· σκαπανεῖς δὲ τὴν ἐργασίαν οὐ ποιοῦνται οὐδὲ βαναυσουργοὶ ὁμοίως εἰ μὴ διὰ τῶν τὸ σχῆμα τοῦτο ἐχόντων ἐργαλείων. τὸ δὲ ἀνθρώπειον σχῆμα οὐδενὶ ἄλλῳ τῶν ἀλόγων ζώων διαφέρει, ἢ τῷ ὀρθόν τε εἶναι καὶ ἔκτασιν χειρῶν ἔχειν καὶ ἐν τῷ προσώπῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ μετωπίου τεταμένον τὸν λεγόμενον μυξωτῆρα φέρειν, δι' οὗ ἥ τε ἀναπνοή ἐστι τῷ ζώῳ καὶ οὐδὲν ἄλλο δείκνυσιν ἢ τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ σταυροῦ. καὶ διὰ τοῦ προφήτου δὲ ἐλέχθη οὕτως· Πνεῦμα πρὸ προσώπου ἡμῶν χριστὸς κύριος. καὶ τὰ παρ'ὑμῖν δὲ σύμβολα τὴν τοῦ σχήματος τούτου δύναμιν δηλοῖ, λέγω δὲ τὰ τῶν οὐηξίλλων καὶ τῶν τροπαίων, δι' ὧν αἵ τε πρόοδοι ὑμῶν πανταχοῦ γίνονται, τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ δυνάμεως τὰ σημεῖα ἐν τούτοις δεικνύντες, εἰ καὶ μὴ νοοῦντες τοῦτο πράττετε.*
>
> For the sea is not traversed except that trophy which is called a sail abide safe in the ship; and the earth is not ploughed without it: diggers and mechanics do not their work, except with tools which have this shape. And the human form differs from that of the irrational animals in nothing else than in its being erect and having the hands extended, and having on the face extending from the forehead what is called the nose, through which there is respiration for the living creature; and this shows no other form than that of the cross. And so it was said by the prophet, "The breath before our face is the Lord Christ." And the power of this form is shown by your own symbols on what are called "vexilla" [banners] and trophies, with which all your state possessions are made, using these as the insignia of your power and government, even though you do so unwittingly.
>
> Justin, *Apol. 1*, 55.3-6

[69] Hurtado (2006a), 150.
[70] The Greek text is taken from Blunt (1911) and the English translation is taken from Roberts and Donaldson (1913).

From this passage, we can glean a couple of noteworthy facts. Firstly, as Justin Martyr remarks, the form of the cross can be found in anything that is T-shaped, including a person with their arms extended or the juxtaposition of the nose to the rest of the face. For certain Christians, it seems that there were allusions to Jesus' cross (and crucifixion) in almost anything.[71] Secondly, Justin asserts that the *vexillum*, the Roman standard, is a powerful symbol of imperial significance. Intriguingly, this is the object that, two centuries later, Constantine adapted. By adding the image of the chi-rho, he created a new imperial standard called the *labarum*. The *labarum*, according to Eusebius, was cross-shaped and topped with a chi-rho within a wreath.[72] Perhaps this was part of the motivation behind Constantine's creation – or, rather, adoption – of the new standard. Not only did the *labarum* contain the emperor's talisman, the saving sign of Christ, but it was also placed on top of the *vexillum*, the Roman standard and an insignia of imperial power. I would argue that as a combination of the two parts – the chi-rho and the *vexillum* with its cross-shape – the *labarum* was an allusion to the power of the Roman past with the added protection of the Christian future. Constantine appropriated the *vexillum*, a symbol of the power wielded by emperors, and transformed it into the *labarum*, a symbol of the power wielded by *Christian* emperors.

For Christians, both before and during the reign of Constantine, there was mystical power behind the image of the cross. The significance to take away from the preceding discussion is not that the cross itself was a powerful apotropaic symbol, but that the shape of the cross was not as it is today (✝). Instead, it took the form of a capital 'T.' This 'T,' according to the epistle of Barnabas, was said to have grace and thus, it was a key symbol for early Christians; a symbol

[71] Hurtado (2006a), 147.
[72] Eusebius, *VC* 2. 30-32.

that the epistle also tells us was connected to the name of Jesus Christ, which is something that will be explored in further detail below.

3.3.2 The *Nomina Sacra*

In early Christian manuscripts, scribes would often abbreviate certain words. A specific group of these abbreviations are called *nomina sacra,* because they were applied to sacred names or objects, such as God, Jesus, or Cross. Fifteen words were commonly abbreviated by Christian scribes and the four that occur most regularly in manuscripts, both in terms of frequency and in the way in which they were rendered as abbreviations with the first and last letters of their nominative and genitive forms, are θεός (θc, θυ) 'God,' κύριος (κc, κυ) 'Lord,' Ἰησοῦσ (ιc, ιυ) 'Jesus,' and Χριστός (χc, χυ) 'Christ.'[73] Since there are no early Christian writers who talk about the scribal practice of the *nomina sacra*, we do not know how it originated or why it was used.[74] However, Hurtado has hypothesized that these words may have been abbreviated for reverential reasons, borrowing from the Hebrew-Jewish tradition.[75] But despite this claim, abbreviations are also employed for less divine words such as man and cross.[76] The word, therefore, did not necessarily have to be divine for it to be shortened by a Christian scribe.

The practice of abbreviating certain words was widespread throughout the Roman Empire, and it appears in the majority of Christian manuscripts.[77] It was not the practice of a sole scribe but seems instead to have been a common practice among certain *Christian* scribes.

---

[73] Martinez (2009), 592. Scribes sometimes indicate the abbreviation by putting a line on top of the remaining letters. For more information, see Römer (2009: 632).
[74] Gamble (1995), 75. More recently, however, Heath (2010: 538) has suggested that they may have functioned as memorization and mediation tools to help devotees through the act of reading through the use of patterns.
[75] Hurtado (1998), 662-664; and Hurtado (2006a), 139. Refer back to Ch.3, fn.27. Hurtado (1998: 668 and 2018: 125-131) links the *nomina sacra* to Greek letters used in numerical symbolism, as they share a horizontal stroke placed above them in common.
[76] Harrison (1964), 10. Harrison stresses the confusion and error that arose when these abbreviations were copied for broader distribution.
[77] Gamble (1995), 74-75.

Intriguingly, 'pagan' scribes writing at the same time did not use the abbreviated forms of the *nomina sacra.*[78] Thus, Martinez postulates that such abbreviations on ancient documentation might indicate Christian authorship.[79] In addition to the *nomina sacra*, monograms – such as the chi-rho and tau-rho – could also be used as scribal abbreviations.[80] We have already seen that the chi-rho was applied in the marginalia of manuscripts similarly to scribal abbreviations as a way for scholars to indicate the appropriateness of certain passages.

The *nomina sacra* provide two points of interest for studying the pre-Constantinian uses of the chi-rho in particular. Firstly, as emphasized by Nicklas and Kraus, there has been no evidence (so far) found to suggest that χριστός was ever abbreviated with a chi-rho in the first two centuries CE on Christian papyri.[81] Indeed, as I have previously stated, the standard abbreviations for χριστός were either the nominative χc or genitive χυ. In light of this argument, I contend that the chi-rho was likely not initially employed as an abbreviation for the word Christ before its adoption by Constantine.

Secondly, the nature of the chi-rho and tau-rho as monograms and how both 'pagans' and Christians deployed them might clarify the function and signification of the symbols before the fourth century. While cataloguing the scribal abbreviations found in Greek manuscripts, Avi-Yonah determined two principal methods for forming abbreviations in antiquity: suspension and contraction.[82] Suspension occurs when the letters at the end of a word are dropped. The chi-rho, which uses the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ, is this type of abbreviation. The second method is contraction, which happens when one or more letters from the middle of the

[78] Römer (2009), 632.
[79] Martinez (2009), 592.
[80] Hurtado (2006a), 137.
[81] Blumell (2010), 103.
[82] Avi-Yonah (1974), 21.

word are omitted. This is the form of abbreviation that the tau-rho, which uses the tau and the Rho from σταυρός, takes.

The methods of forming abbreviations in antiquity are fundamental when we consider that 'pagans' and Christians appear to have formulated abbreviations differently. 'Pagans' preferred to use a combination of suspension and contraction when creating abbreviations. In contrast, Christians tended to use contraction, taking a letter from the beginning and the end of a word, as is the case of the above-mentioned *nomina sacra*, the most characteristic type of Christian abbreviation.[83] Therefore, the tau-rho, as a contraction of the words σταυρός and σταυρόω by dropping out the middle diphthong αυ, is different from the other 'Christ monograms' in that it is the only one that is a true *nomina sacra*.[84] I have already established that the chi-rho was likely a Greek/'pagan' symbol before Constantine appropriated it, and the method by which it is formed, suspension, further supports this supposition. I contend that the opposite is true for the tau-rho. Rather than having been adopted from an earlier Greek/'pagan' symbol, this examination indicates that the tau-rho may have originated as a symbol amongst early Christians. Its parallels with the formation of the *nomina sacra* and its adherence to Christian practices of abbreviation corroborate this hypothesis.

3.3.3 Christian Symbols before the Fourth Century

3.3.3.a The 'Christian' Chi-rho

Several authors – such as Black, Finegan, and Jensen – claim that the chi-rho was already in existence as a Christian symbol before the time of Constantine.[85] However, other scholars – such

[83] Avi-Yonah (1974), 26.
[84] Hurtado (2006a), 146.
[85] See, for instance, Black (1970), 326; Finegan (1969), 233-234; Jensen (2000b), 138; and Vopel (1899), 23. Even though he studies the designs on gold glass and states that the chi-rho does not appear on the gold glass until the middle of the fourth century, Vopel still claims that the symbol was used as an abbreviation of Christ as early as the third century. However, Finegan (1969: 234) stresses that the chi-rho only begins to appear frequently on the material evidence after Constantine's vision.

as Bruun, Fox, and Sulzberger – disagree. They are wary of conferring a Christian meaning onto the symbol until after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in the fourth century.[86] Before discussing whether or not the chi-rho was applied to objects with an intentional Christian connotation before the fourth century, I will dissect several examples presented as evidence for this supposed pre-Constantinian Christian usage.

A few examples from the material record might indicate an early Christian use of the chi-rho, most of which come from funerary contexts. For example, an inscription from the cemetery of St. Hermes in Rome features a chi-rho and the consular date GAL. COS. interpreted as either belonging to the time of Gallo (298 CE) or Gallicano (317 CE).[87] I maintain that since the occurrences of the chi-rho on pre-Constantinian inscriptions are so rare, it is more likely that the inscription belongs to the later date.

A second inscription, an altar from Phrygia, also purportedly contains the monogram (see **Figure 3.9**). The inscription reads:[88]

> *[Οὐνόμασιν σεμνοῖσιν] | ἰσόψηφος δυσὶ τούτ[ο | Γάϊος ὡς ἅγιος, ὡς ἁγ[α]|θὸς, προλέγω. | ζωὸς ἐὼν τοῦτον τύμ|βον τις ἔτευξεν ἑαυτῷ, | Μούσαις ἀσκηθείς, | Γάϊος πραγματικός, | [ἠ]δ'ἀλόχῳ φιλίῃ Τατίῃ | τέκεσίν τε ποθητοῖς, | οἵ ῥα τὸν ἀίδιον τοῦ|τον ἔ[χ]ωσι δόμον, | σὺν 'Ρουβῇ μεγάλοιο | θ[εο]ῦ (Χριστοῦ)[89] θεράποντι. | [ο]ὐκ ἔσχον πλοῦτον πολὺν | εἰς βίον, οὐ πολὺ χρῆμα, | γράμμασι δ'ἠσκήθην ἐκπο|νέσας μετρίοις· | ἐξ ὧν τοῖσι [φ]ίλοισιν ἐπή[ρ]|κεον ὡς δύναμίς μοι, | σπουδὴν ἣν ε[ἶχ]ον πᾶσι | χαριζόμενος. | τοῦτο γὰρ ἦν μοι τερπνὸν | ἐπαρκεῖν εἴ τις ἔχρῃζε |ὡς ἄλλων ὄλβος τέρψιν | ἄγει κραδίῃ. | μηδεὶς δ'ἐν πλούτῳ τυφω|θεὶς γαῦρα φρονείτω· | πᾶσι γὰρ εἷς Ἅιδης καὶ τέ|λος ἐστὶν ἴσον. |ἔστιν τις μέγας ὢν ἐν κτή|μασιν; οὐ πλέον οὗτος, | ταὐτὸ μέτρον γαίης πρὸς | τάφον ἐκδέχεται. | σπεύδετε, τὴν ψυχὴν | εὐφραίνετε πάντοτε, θνη[τοί], | ὡς ἡδὺς βίοτος, καὶ μέτρον | ἐστι ζοῆς. | ταῦτα, φίλοι· μετὰ ταῦτα τί | γὰρ πλέον; οὐκέτι ταῦτα· | στήλλη ταῦτα λαλεῖ καὶ λί|θος, οὐ γὰρ ἐγώ. | θύραι μὲν ἔνθα καὶ | πρὸς Ἅιδαν ὁδοὶ | ἀνεξόδευτοι δ'εἰσὶν | ἐς φάος τρίβοι· οἱ δὴ δίκαιοι πάντοτ | εἰς*

[86] Bruun (1966), 61; Fox (1986), 616; Marucchi (1935), 201; and Sulzberger (1925), 366. Bruun says that early use of the chi-rho with a clear Christian significance is extremely rare.
[87] Marucchi (1935), 201.
[88] The Greek text and the English translation are taken from Cook (2018), 224-225. See also *ICG* 1031, *SEG* 6 210, *SEG* 29 1400, and *SEG* 45 1743.
[89] As we will see in paragraph following the translation of the inscription, I believe the symbol being used is actually a tau-rho. Therefore, I have opted to leave the chi-rho out of the Greek text. This reading is supported by Cook (2018: 225) and *SEG* 29 1400.

ἀ[νά]στασιν | [πρ]οδεικνύουσι (?) το[ῦ | το δυνα[μέων] θεὸς | (Three lines illegible) | .....ποιμ[ένα] | το - - - - - - - | ..... ἀ[νάστα]σις (?).

> I Gaius, who am equal in numerical value to two words of awe, make this declaration as a holy and good man: A man – Gaius the lawyer, trained in the arts – built this tomb while he was alive for himself and his dear wife Tatia and their lamented children, that they might have this eternal home together with Roubes, servant of the great God Christ [*sic*]. I did not have much wealth or much property for my livelihood, but I worked hard and gained a modicum of learning. This enabled me to assist my friends, as far as I was able, freely putting the ability I had at the disposal of all. Helping anyone who was in need was a joy to me, as, in the case of other people, prosperity brings joy to the heart. Let no one deluded in his wealth harbor proud thoughts, for there is one Hades and an equal end for all. Is someone great in possessions? He receives no more, (but) the same measure of earth for a tomb. Hasten, mortals, gladden your souls at all times as (allegedly) a pleasant way of life is also the measure of existence. So, friends. After this, no more of this – for what more is there? A monument of stone speaks this, not I. Here are the doors and the road to Hades, but the path has no way out to the light. Indeed the righteous at all times point the way to resurrection. This, the God of Hosts. [3 lines] shep[herd] … r[essurre]ction

The *bomos* (altar) likely dates to before 211 CE – when Caracalla granted all free men in the Empire citizenship – since Gaius has no *nomen gentilicium*. A line of the text has the word Θ(εο)ῦ followed by a monogram, which has been interpreted as a chi-rho replacing the word Χρ(ιστοῦ).[90] When Buckler, Calder, and Cox published the inscription in 1926, they included an image on which the majority of the writing, including the supposed chi-rho, was illegible. A closer examination of the *bomos* in a subsequent publication from 1979 suggests that the monogram is not a chi-rho but a tau-rho.[91] Although the inscription is heavily damaged and extremely difficult to read in photographs, I agree that the symbol appears to resemble a tau-rho more than a chi-rho. If it were a tau-rho, the early date would not be as inconsistent with other

[90] Buckler, Calder, & Cox (1926), 61-64. See also Finegan (1969), 233. For the date of the inscription, see Sheppard (1979: 179) and Cook (2018: 225). For a discussion on the Jewish elements and interpretation of the inscription, see Cline (2011: 100-101); and Trebilco (2004: 76-77).
[91] Sheppard (1979), 179. See also Cook (2018), 225 and *SEG* 29 1400.

existing evidence, such as the presence of the tau-rho in biblical papyri dated to the 2nd century CE, which will be discussed in more detail below.

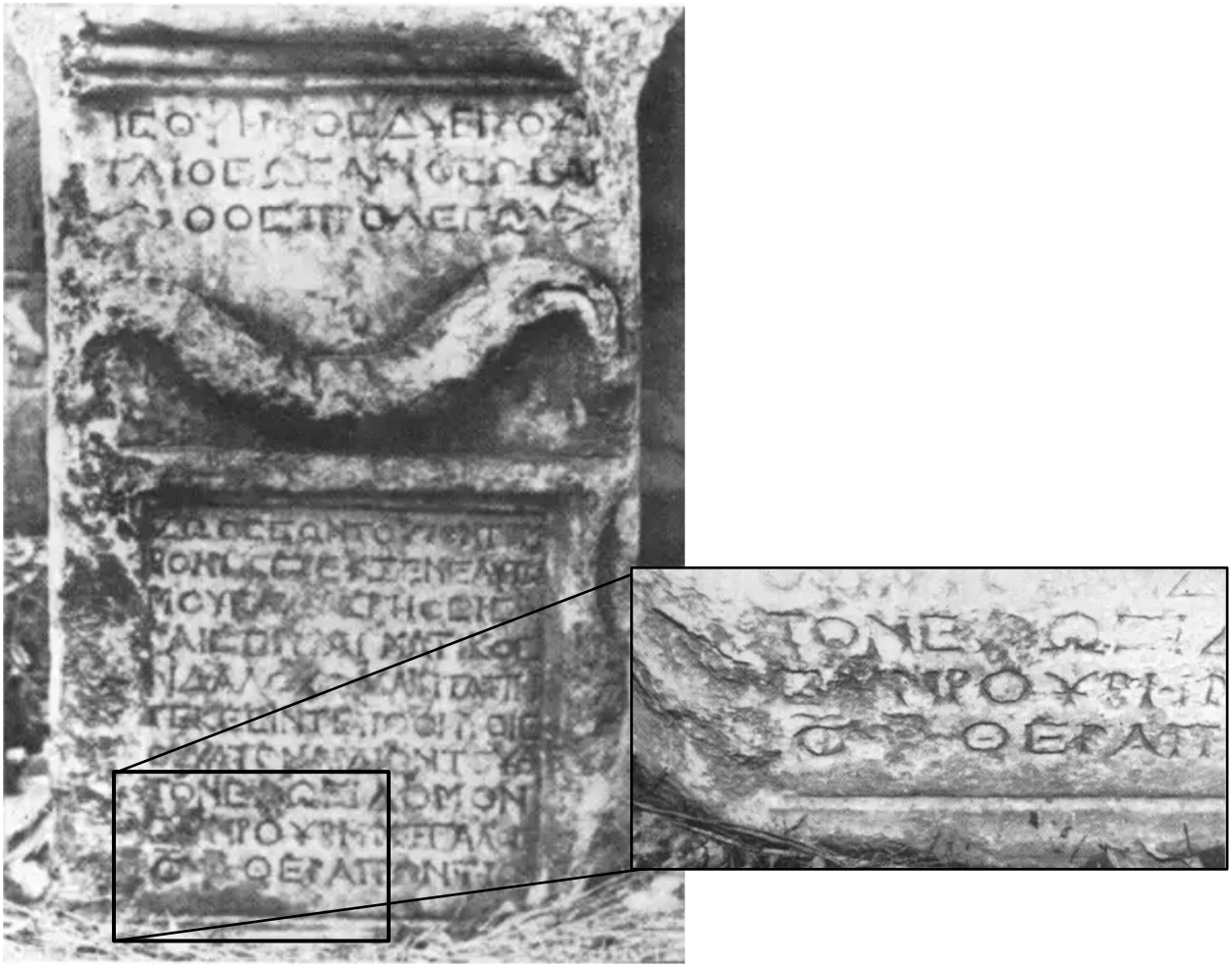

Figure 3.9 The front panel inscription from the Tomb of Gaius found in Phrygia. A tau-rho appears as the second character in the final line. ca. 211 CE
Sheppard (1979), Plate XXII. Copyright © The British Institute at Ankara 1979

A third inscription, also dated to the third century, features a chi-rho that might refer to a citizen – a man name Glyconides who was a bishop (ἐπίσκοπος) in Eumeneia – as a Christian.[92] Supposing that the inscription belongs to the third century, there is nothing to exclude the opposite conclusion: that both the word *episcopos* and the chi-rho are being employed in a non-

[92] *ICG* 1049. See also Finegan (1969), 233.

Christian sense, something that is mentioned in the original publication of the *bomos*.[93] Furthermore, the method of dating the inscription is itself spurious. Buckler, Calder, and Cox assign the date of the early third century only because of the commonality of the *praenomen* Aurelius, which is found more often in third-century inscriptions, even though the authors themselves admit that the name was still used late into the fourth century.[94] There is no reason, then, to assume that the inscription is not from the fourth century – sometime after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge when the chi-rho is found more frequently in Christian contexts – if, indeed, we can even determine that the context for this inscription is meant to be Christian in the first place.

There are two more examples of the early use of a chi-rho in Christian funerary inscriptions. The first one appears on a Greek inscription from the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome. It states:

[ἐν] ΙΗ ☧ Κάρπος, δοῦ|λος θ(εο)ῦ

[*In] Jesus Christ, Karpos is a servant of God*
ICUR 26077 = *IGCVO* 334A

The catacomb of Priscilla was used for burials, including those of several popes, from the early second century until the middle of the sixth.[95] Therefore, it is difficult to say for certain when the inscription was made. Dölger proposes that this inscription dates to around 200 CE.[96] However, there is no consensus on this date, and the most recent scholarship argues for a date of the fourth

[93] Buckler, Calder, & Cox (1926), 73-74. Lanckoronski (1892: 219) states that the chi-rho is an abbreviation for the word χρεοφυλάκειον, the title of the keeper of the register of public debtors.
[94] Buckler, Calder, & Cox (1926), 73. Interestingly, the authors mention that the strong affirmation of Christianity (with the use of *epicopos* and the chi-rho) in the inscription is odd for third-century Eumeneia. However, they argue that the potential 'pagan' meaning behind both *epicopos* and the chi-rho would have tempered the Christian meaning.
[95] Claridge (2010), 454-455.
[96] See *IGCVO* 334A and also Dölger (1928), 382.

century CE.[97] Since there is no firm proof to suggest that the chi-rho was employed in Christian contexts before the fourth century, I believe a date of 200 CE is spurious, especially without any further supporting evidence. Even though an earlier date is highly improbable, the inscription is nonetheless an interesting example, as it abbreviates both Jesus (IH) and Christ (☧). This abbreviation exemplifies the use of the chi-rho as a substitution for the word *χριστός* within the text itself (as opposed to featuring as a freestanding symbol), a type of implementation that rarely occurs in funerary inscriptions, as we will see further in Chapter 6.

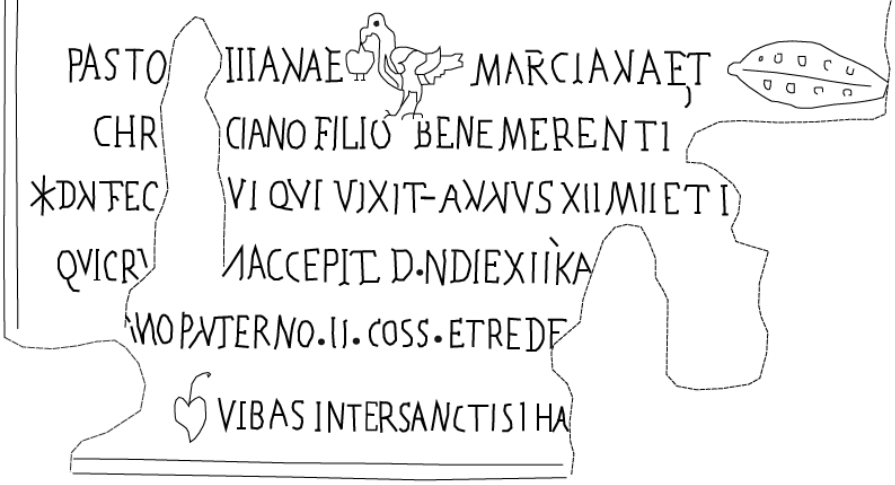

Figure 3.10 A funerary inscription from the catacomb of Callixtus in Rome (*ILCV* 3315 = *ICUR* 8716). An iota-chi appears on the left side of the inscription. 268 CE.
Drawn by author (based on *EDB online:* 18773)

Another inscription from Rome dates to 268 CE (see **Figure 3.10**).[98] It was found in the catacomb of Callixtus and reads:

> *Pasto[r et T]i[t]iana et (dove) Marciana et| Chr[e]st[e Mar]ciano, filio benemerenti [in] | ☧ d(omino) n(ostro) fec[eru]n[t] qui uixit annus (sic) XII, m(enses) II et d[ies…]*

[97] Grossi Gondi (1920), 161; and Rüpke & Glock (2005), 1088 (#2149). Grossi Gondi mentions that the formula *Δοῦλος τοῦ Θεοῦ* dates to the 3rd or 4th century. Furthermore, the entry under Karpos in the *Prosopographie Chrétienne du Bas-Empire: Prosopographie de l'Italie Chrétienne (313-604)* dates use of the name Karpos to the 4th century, using this inscription as an example (see Pietri & Pietri 1999: 1225).

[98] This is the date provided in the *ILCV*. See also Ferguson (2009: 395). According to Felle (2016: 1161), the inscription dates to 279 CE. Janssens (1981: 76) mentions Marinianus and Paternus were consuls in either 268 or 279 CE. For our purposes, either date does not change its significance as an early example of a 'chi-rho' – which, as we will see, it is not – in a funerary inscription.

> *| qui gra[tiam] accepit d(omini) n(ostri) die XII ka[l (endas)O]ctob[r]es [Ma]|[rini]ano (et) Paterno II co(n)s(ulibu)s et rede[dit] XI ka[l(endas) s(upra) s(criptas)?] | uibas inter sanctis in a[eternum]*
>
> Pastor, Titiana, Marciana and Chreste made this for Marcianus, a well-deserving son in [Jesus] Christ [our] Lord. He lived twelve years, two months, and [...] days. He received grace on September 20 when the consuls were Marinianus and Paternus the second time. He gave up (his soul) on September 21. May you live among the saints in eternity.[99]
>
> *ILCV* 3315 = *ICUR* 8716

This inscription features one of the earliest surviving references to baptism.[100] If it has a chi-rho, it is also evidence of the early use of the symbol in a securely Christian context. However, when examining an image of the inscription more closely, it is clear that the abbreviation is actually an iota-chi, the earliest known abbreviation for Christ's name.[101] Therefore, this is not a pre-Constantinian use of the chi-rho in a funerary context.

Early examples of the chi-rho have also been found in contexts other than funerary. One example, a chi-rho deeply etched into a piece of broken pottery from Dura-Europos, has been dated to the third century.[102] Frye, Gilliam, Ingholt, and Welles, the original authors who published the sherd, suggest that the chi-rho is being used as a sign for *tribunus*, but they provide no reason for how they reached that conclusion.[103] Finegan disagrees with their assessment and claims that the symbol signifies Christ. He decides this because next to the monogram on the sherd is a large alpha, possibly alluding to the alpha and omega and thus referring to Christ as the beginning and the end.[104] More recently, however, Baird suggests that the chi-rho found at Dura

[99] This translation is taken from Ferguson (2009), 373.
[100] Ferguson (2009), 373.
[101] Mazzoleni (2014: 453) also states that the symbol is an iota-chi. For more on the iota-chi, see the beginning of Chapter 3.
[102] Initially published in *YCS XIV* (1955), No. 216, Finegan (1969: 233) uses the pottery as evidence for the early use of the chi-rho in Christian contexts. Refer also to Ch. 1, fn. 21.
[103] Frye, Gilliam, Ingholt & Welles (1955), 194.
[104] Finegan (1969), 233. For more information on the significance of the alpha and the omega, see Chapters 7 and 8.

was a monogram for the office of the Chreophylax (the finance official).[105] Therefore, there is no consensus on the interpretation of the chi-rho. In addition, although the original authors likely give the sherd a *terminus ante quem* based on the destruction date of Dura (256/7 CE) – and possibly because of the style of pottery (or type of clay being used) – there is still no reason to assume that the markings on the sherd were not made sometime later, possibly in the fourth century.[106] The uncertainty of the dating of the sherd, along with reservation surrounding its interpretation, indicate that it is not a reliable instance of the Christian use of the chi-rho before the fourth century.

A milestone from Constantine in Numidia Cirtensis (modern Algeria) also features an early example of a chi-rho. The inscription, dated to 216 CE, reads:

> *Imp(erator) Caesar | M(arcus) Aurelius Seve|rus Antoninus | pius felix Aug(ustas) Par|thicus max(imus) Britan|nicus max(imus) Germani|cus max(imus) pontif(icus) max(imus) | trib(unicia) potest(ate) XIX imp(eratori) IIII | co(n)s(ul) III p(ater) p(atriae) proco(n)s(ul) | maxi|mus invictissimus sanc|tissimus fortissimus fe|licissimus et super om|nes principes indulgen|tissimus divi Septimi | Severi pii Aug(usti) filius VI*
>
> Emperor Caesar Marcus Severus Antoninus, Pius Felix Augustus, Parthicus Maximus, Britannicus Maximus, Germanicus Maximus, high priest, in his nineteenth tribunician power, emperor for the fourth time, consul three times, father of the state, greatest proconsul, most unconquered, most venerable, most strong, most blessed and most kind above all the leaders. Son of the divine Septimius Severus, pius Augustus. Mile 6.
>
> *CIL VIII* 10305

[105] According to Baird (2018: 164, fn. 25), multiple chi-rhos have been found at Dura, but all in relation to compartments that stored records at a building identified as a Chreophylakion. See also Baird (2006), 160.

[106] Evidence shows that some occupation or intermittent activity occurred at Dura after 256/7 CE. For instance, fifth-century lamps and a coin of Constantius II have been found. There is knowledge of a Christian hermit who lived there during the time of Constantine (Baird 2012: 320-322; and Heath 2011: 71). Furthermore, although Ammianus Marcellinus mentions Dura was abandoned when Justinian's army crossed through the city (24.1.5), the fact that an army passed through the city indicates activity occurred at the abandoned city. In addition, current archaeological theory focuses more on the 'active process of ruination' than the idea of complete abandonment at one specific point in time (Stoler 2013: 9). Finally, the date of Dura's abandonment is based on the last Syrian coins that were found that the site (which date to 256/7 CE). Intriguingly, Syrian mints stopped producing coins around 256/7 CE, which may have remained in circulation until the first quarter of the fourth century (Butcher 2012: 479). Therefore, the date of Dura's abandonment is far from certain. For more information on the process of abandonment at Dura, see Baird's 2020 article "The Ruinnation of Dura-Europos."

On the other side of the inscription, there is a chi-rho inscribed along with the letters *B(ono) R(ei) P(ublicae) N(atus),* an honorific often used in inscriptions for emperors.[107] According to Renier, the milestone originated in Hamma before being brought to the city of Constantine.[108] Based on the evidence of several other milestones found in North Africa and dated to the second decade of the fourth century that I examine in detail in Chapter 6, it is almost certain that the reverse inscription was added to the milestone of 216 CE sometime around the beginning of the fourth century. Perhaps the addition of the chi-rho even occurred when the inscription was brought to Constantine from Hamma. The city of Constantine, which took the emperor's name when it was rebuilt in 313 CE, had been destroyed during Constantine's war with Maxentius. If the symbol was indeed an early fourth-century addition, this milestone provides compelling evidence for the significance of the chi-rho to the Constantinian dynasty and links the symbol to the victory of the emperor, who was *bono reipublicae natus* (born for the good of the state). We will see more milestones from North Africa connected to the Constantinian dynasty in Chapter 6.

The graffiti under the Vatican, where several 'Christ monograms' (chi-rhos and tau-rhos) have been found, might also support a pre-Constantinian Christian use of the chi-rho. Since the inscriptions on Wall G have been dated fairly precisely between the years 290 and 315 CE,[109] they are supplied as proof of this usage.[110] The most securely dated example from this wall alludes to the battle at the Milvian Bridge between Constantine and Maxentius. The words *hoc vince* appear next to the image of a chi-rho, which references Constantine's vision before the

[107] *CIL VIII* 10306. See Egbert (1896: 421) for a list of Latin abbreviations and, in particular, BPRN. See Ehrenberg (1974:122), Ferris (2021: 11-12), and Henig (1995: 61) for the fact that BPRN is an honorific for emperors often used in inscriptions. See also Birley (1958), 90.
[108] Renier (1855), 532.
[109] Guarducci (1960a), 112. In a more recent study, Vivaldi (2015: 351-355) concludes that Wall G was built sometime between the middle of the third century and around 320 CE. She determines these dates not on the writing style or inscriptions but a thorough topographical analysis of the construction of the whole tomb area. Wall G has also been discussed in Chapter 1.
[110] Black (1970), 326; and Jensen (2000b), 138.

battle and suggests that the tale was widespread by 315 CE, at least in Rome.[111] However, I believe this particular inscription also illustrates that the graffiti on Wall G with 'Christ monograms' also date between 312 CE, when the vision took place, and 315 CE when the wall was no longer in use.

Another potential early example of a chi-rho has been found in the *hypogeum* (underground tomb) of the Acilians in the oldest area of the catacomb of Priscilla. De Rossi claims that the writing style used on the marble slab suggests a date of the second or third century, but the inscription was found underneath a mosaic, which features the image of a large chi-rho, dated to the fourth century.[112] A chi-rho also appears in the final line of the inscription underneath, which reads (in part):

COI ΔOξA EN ☧

Glory to you in Christ

Here, the chi-rho is a part of the inscription itself, rather than a symbol set apart from the writing. In this way, it is being used as a *compendium scripturae*, which, according to Marucchi (1935) in his *Manuel of Christian Archaeology*, is how the symbol was employed in the earliest inscriptions known to have it.[113] However, there is no reason to assume that the inscription does not date to the same period as the mosaic. Indeed, there is no evidence to preclude that the two were both made at the time of the burial.[114] In any case, without any firm datable evidence within the inscription itself, such as a consular year, its date remains uncertain, and its pre-Constantinian use is merely conjecture.

---

[111] Guarducci (1960a), 124-125.
[112] de Rossi (1888-1889), 31-33; and Finegan (1969), 252. According to Finegan, the inscription does not date to the fourth century.
[113] Marucchi (1935), 201. Hurtado (2018: 140) states that the earliest Christian uses of the 'Christ monograms' denotes the beginning of "Christian 'visual' culture." So even if Marruchi is correct in his assessment – and as we will see in Chapters 5 and 6 it is unlikely he is – the chi-rho would still have an iconographic function.
[114] However, de Rossi (1888-1889: 33) argues that the mosaic and the inscription do not date to the same period.

This section has demonstrated that the Christian use of the chi-rho in Christian contexts before the time of Constantine is inconclusive. Finegan maintains that prior to the reign of Constantine, even without an explicitly Christian context – for instance, should the monogram appear on an object by itself – one cannot exclude a Christian interpretation of the chi-rho.[115] However, the pre-Constantinian 'pagan' examples of the symbol above illustrate that caution ought to be exercised before automatically applying a Christian interpretation to the symbol, especially before the time of Constantine. During his analysis of the 'Christ monograms,' Sulzberger established that even though early Christians could have known and utilized the chi-rho, there are no conclusive examples from the material record to indicate that they did.[116] Although one cannot argue from a lack of evidence, I stress that we also cannot assume an intended Christian meaning for the symbol based on what it came to symbolize during the fourth century. In every above-mentioned instance, the chi-rho either occurs in a non-Christian context – suggesting a 'pagan,' rather than Christian, interpretation – or it is found in a securely Christian context, but with an unconvincing pre-Constantinian date.

3.3.3.b The Christian Tau-rho

In direct contrast to the chi-rho, the early Christian use of the tau-rho is well attested. Despite this, the tau-rho is often overlooked as a significant early Christian symbol.[117] We have already seen that the Greek letter Tau held magical significance in Greek-speaking Christian communities and ancient Christian authors viewed the Tau as the form of the cross upon which Christ was crucified. Despite the scarcity of evidence for pictorial representations of the cross in early Christian artwork, the cross was clearly connected to Jesus and his crucifixion early on.

[115] Finegan (1969), 233.
[116] Sulzberger (1925), 401.
[117] Hurtado (2000: 279) criticizes the lack of scholarship on the tau-rho and has done much to increase our knowledge of the symbol.

This association is made explicit in Book VIII of the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles, circa 2nd or 3rd century CE, where the cross is linked to the acrostic phrase Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτήρ, the initial letters of which spell ἰχθύς "fish."[118] In this text, the word σταυρός "cross" is added to the end of the formula. The oracle states,[119]

> *Ἱδρώσει δὲ χθών, κρίσεως σημεῖον ὅτ' ἔσται.*
> *Ἥξει δ'οὐρανόθεν βασιλεὺς αἰῶσιν ὁ μέλλων,*
> *Σάρκα παρὼν πᾶσαν κρῖναι καὶ κόσμον ἅπαντα.*
> *Ὄψονται δὲ θεὸν μέροπες πιστοὶ καὶ ἄπιστοι*
> *Ὕψιστον μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων ἐπὶ τέρμα χρόνοιο.*
> *Σαρκοφόρων δ'ἀνδρῶν ψυχὰς ἐπὶ βήματι κρίνει,*
>
> *Χέρσος ὅταν ποτὲ κόσμος ὅλος καὶ ἄκανθα γένηται.*
> *Ῥίψουσιν δ'εἴδωλα βροτοὶ καὶ πλοῦτον ἅπαντα.*
> *Ἐκκαύσει δὲ τὸ πῦρ γῆν οὐρανὸν ἠδὲ Θάλασσαν*
> *Ἰχνεῦον, ῥέξει τε πύλας εἱρκτῆς Ἀίδαο.*
> *Σάρξ τότε πᾶσα νεκρῶν ἐς ἐλευθέριον φάος ἥξει*
> *Τῶν ἁγίων· ἀνόμους δὲ τὸ πῦρ αἰῶσιν ἐλέγξει.*
> *Ὁππόσα τις πράξας ἔλαθεν, τότε πάντα λαλήσει·*
> *Στήθεα γὰρ ζοφόεντα θεὸς φωστῆρσιν ἀνοίξει.*
>
> *Θρῆνος δ'ἐκ πάντων ἔσται καὶ βρυγμὸς ὀδόντων.*
> *Ἐκλείψει σέλας ἠελίου ἄστρων τε χορεῖαι.*
> *Οὐρανὸν εἰλίξει· μήνης δέ τε φέγγος ὀλεῖται.*
> *Ὑψώσει δὲ φάραγγας, ὀλεῖ δ'ὑψώματα βουνῶν,*
>
> *Ὕψος δ'οὐκέτι λυγρὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι φανεῖται.*
> *Ἴσα δ'ὄρη πεδίοις ἔσται καὶ πᾶσα θάλασσα*
> *Οὐκέτι πλοῦν ἕξει. γῆ γὰρ φρυχθεῖσα τότ'ἔσται*
> *Σὺν πηγαῖς, ποταμοί τε καχλάζοντες λείψουσιν.*
>
> *Σάλπιγξ δ'οὐρανόθεν φωνὴν πολύθρηνον ἀφήσει*
> *Ὠρύουσα μύσος μελέων καὶ πήματα κόσμου.*
> *Ταρτάρεον δὲ χάος δείξει τότε γαῖα χανοῦσα.*

[118] Finegan (1969), 230. This acrostic phrase is the reason for the importance of the fish in early Christian art. The Sibylline Oracles (of which there are 12) were written over a period of seven hundred years (from the 2nd century BCE to the 7th century CE). The precise date in which Book VIII was written is not known, but it seems to have been written in two parts, one Jewish and the other Christian (Noble 2021:75). For the second (Christian) part, in which the acrostic occurs, Noble (2021: 75) suggests a date of the third century. Since part of it is quoted by Lactantius, it is likely earlier than the beginning of the fourth century. For more information on the dating of Book VIII, see Bartlett (1985: 35-42); Gauger (2012: 458); Gruen (2020: 190); and Stoneman (2011: 196).

[119] The Greek text is from Gauger (2012: 184-195), and the English is taken from Milton (1899: 185-187). For an English translation that attempts to capture the acrostic, see the Anonymous translation in the *Christian Remembrancer* (1862).

Ἥξουσιν δ'ἐπὶ βῆμα θεοῦ βασιλῆες ἅπαντες.
Ῥεύσει δ'οὐρανόθεν ποταμὸς πυρὸς ἠδὲ θεείου.

Σῆμα δέ τοι τότε πᾶσι βροτοῖς, σφρηγὶς ἐπίσημος
Τὸ ξύλον ἐν πιστοῖς, τὸ κέρας τὸ ποθούμενον ἔσται,
Ἀνδρῶν εὐσεβέων ζωή, πρόσκομμα δὲ κόσμου,
Ὕδασι φωτίζον κλητοὺς ἐν δώδεκα πηγαῖς·
Ῥάβδος ποιμαίνουσα σιδηρείη γε κρατήσει.
Οὗτος ὁ νῦν προγραφεὶς ἐν ἀκροστιχίοις θεὸς ἡμῶν
Σωτὴρ ἀθάνατος βασιλεύς, ὁ παθὼν ἕνεχ'ἡμῶν.

Earth will sweat when the judgment sign appears,
And the eternal King will come from heaven
In person to judge all flesh and all the world.
The faithful and the faithless shall see God
Exalted with the saints at the end of time.
The souls of fleshy men upon his throne
He will judge, when the whole world is laid waste,
And thorns spring up. And men will cast away
Their idols and all wealth. And searching fire
Will burn the land, the heaven and the sea;
And burn the gates of Hades' prison-house.
Then to the free light of the saints shall come
All the flesh of the dead, but lawless ones
The fire will try forever. Every thing
One did in secret will he then declare,
For dark breasts God will open to the light.
Wailing will come from all, and gnashing of teeth;
The brightness of the sun will be eclipsed,
And the dances of the stars; the heaven shall whirl.
And the moon's beaming luster be destroyed.
He will exalt the valleys and destroy
The heights of hills, and no more shall appear
A gloomy height among men. With the plains
The mountains will be level, and no more
Will there be any sailing on the sea.
For earth with springs shall be by thunder parched,
And dashing streams shall fail. The trump from heaven
Shall send a woful (*sic*) sound, and bellow forth
Approaching pest and sorrows of the world.
And the the widely-yawning earth will show
Tartarean chaos, and all kings shall come
Unto God's judgement-seat. From heaven shall flow
A stream of fire and brimstone. But the Wood
Shall then be to all mortals for a sign,
Among the faithful a distinguished seal,

> The longed-for horn, the life of pious men,
> But the world's stumbling-block, bestowing light
> On the elect by water in twelve streams.
> And then the shepherd-rod of iron shall rule.
> This one now in acrostics written down
> Is our God, Saviour, and immortal King,
> Even the one who suffered for our sake.
>
> Sibylline Oracles, VIII, 217-250

Thus, the acrostic reads: ΙΗΣΟΥΥΣ ΧΡΕΙΣΤΟΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ ΣΩΤΗΡ ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣ (JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR, CROSS).[120] Since the Greek Tau, as a derivative of the Jewish Taw, was directly linked to the cross, it is likely that the tau-rho, too, was viewed as a type of cross-monogram.[121] The material evidence corroborates the literary evidence. The earliest Christian uses of the tau-rho do not employ it as a freestanding symbol. Rather, it is found in biblical texts, where, as mentioned by Hurtado, it appears as a *nomen sacrum* for the Greek words "cross" (σταυρός) and "crucify" (σταυρόω).[122] Several New Testament manuscripts have been found that use the tau-rho in this way and serve as exempla of the importance of the tau-rho in the centuries before Constantine.

One textual example is the Bodmer II papyrus (𝔓66), where the tau-rho appears as a reference to Jesus's cross and crucifixion. This papyrus contains a section of the gospel according to John, which has been dated through palaeographical means to around 200 CE.[123] The tau-rho can be found at least seven times in the manuscript, replacing both nouns and verbs

[120] Dactylic hexameters are a feature of all extant Sibylline oracles and acrostics were commonly mentioned by ancient authors as features of the oracles used to make them authentic (Buitenwerf 2003:108; and Collins 2001: 183). According to Buitenwerf (2003: 108) this is the only Jewish-Christian Sibylline oracle to have an acrostic, so it may have been used as a legitimizing device predicting the ministry of Christ. The inclusion of the word stauros (ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣ) to the end of the line allows the phrase to also be a dactylic hexameter, with stauros forming the sixth foot. Since only fragments of the original 'pagan' Sybilline books survive (Collins 2001: 117), we cannot know if this was a feature of all of the acrostic phrases. If it was, this may have also been a way to legitimitize the oracle in Book VIII. It might also indicate, however, that any suitable word could have followed ἰχθύς to finish the hexameter.

[121] Finegan (1969), 234.

[122] Hurtado (2006a), 136. See also Hull (2010: 185-186).

[123] Hurtado (2006a), 140-142. Jensen (2017: 42) says this is the earliest example we have of the tau-rho. Unfortunately, she does not substantiate this claim with any further discussion.

that refer to the crucifixion of Jesus. For instance, in the section where Pilate has just delivered Christ to be crucified, the word σταυρωθῇ is abbreviated as σP̄θη.[124] Therefore, the tau-rho appears in the middle of the word, abbreviating everything between the sigma and the theta.

There are several other examples in manuscripts that use the symbol in this way. For instance, the tau-rho also appears as a similar type of device in the Vienna fragment of 𝔓45, dated between 200-250 CE. This fragment comes from the gospel of Matthew, and the word σταυρωθήναι ("to be crucified") appears in a contracted form with a tau-rho.[125] In Bodmer XIV (𝔓75), another manuscript dated to the early third century that has sections of the gospels of Luke and John, the symbol is employed in much the same way (see **Figure 3.11**).[126] In these three early-third century manuscripts, the tau-rho appears in a similar fashion, within the abbreviation of a word. Hurtado, who has published the most thorough modern research on the early Christian significance of the symbol, contends that the freestanding tau-rho in art is different from how it is employed in these early Christian manuscripts, where the tau-rho forms part of words referring to the crucifixion of Jesus.[127] As these manuscripts indicate, the tau-rho's function is very different from the function of the chi-rho as a scribal device on 'pagan' papyri. One abbreviates a word embedded directly in the manuscript, whereas the latter appears as a freestanding abbreviation in the margins of the papyri.

[124] Finegan (1969), 253.
[125] Hurtado (2006a), 142; and Roth (2015), 123-125.
[126] Hurtado (2006a), 141-142.
[127] Hurtado (2006a), 150-151.

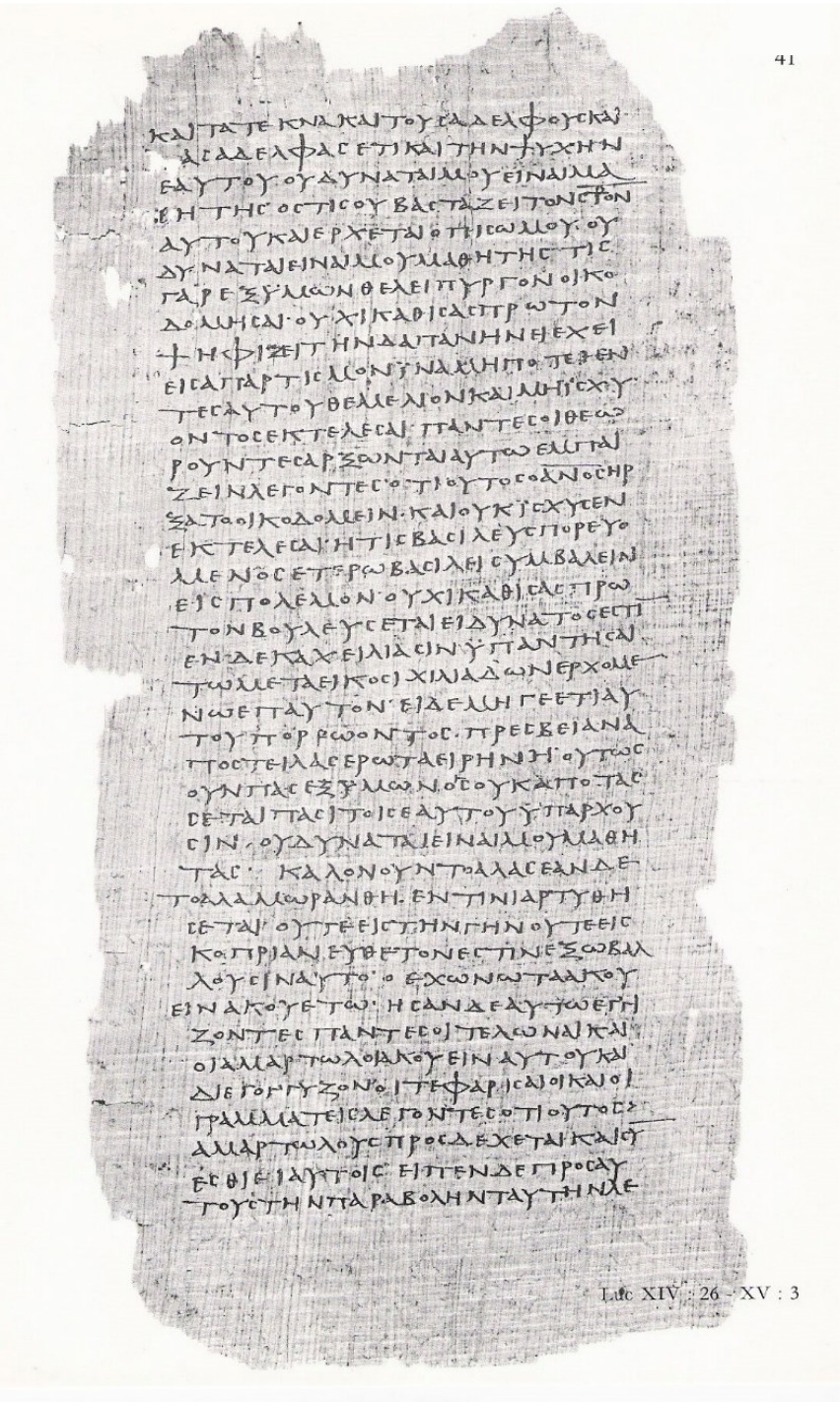

Figure 3.11 The Gospel of Luke, passage 14:26 – 15:3 ($\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, Hanna Papyrus 1 (Mater Verbi), previously Bodmer XIV) found in Egypt. A tau-rho appears at the end of the fourth line. Early 3rd century CE.
© Vatican Library. Digital facsimile reproduced with permission from the Centre for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts (www.csntm.org)

These examples indicate that Christians employed the tau-rho as a scribal device before Lactantius mentions it in his *De Mortibus Persecutorum*. Hurtado speculates that the tau-rho was

already in use by Christians well before the creation of these three manuscripts since it is doubtful that the symbol spontaneously appeared in them simultaneously without having originated elsewhere first.[128] It is more plausible that the device had already developed within the scribal tradition. This early development of the tau-rho is further implied by its appearance in the Valentinian School's *Gospel of Truth* in the Jung Codex.[129] The use of the symbol in Christian manuscripts demonstrates its early – and long-standing – importance as a Christian symbol.

A third important factor to note about the use of the tau-rho in these manuscripts is that it appears mostly in sentences concerning Jesus' death.[130] The application of the tau-rho as a *nomen sacrum* indicates that these early Christian scribes imbued the cross with respect and reverence.[131] Indeed, Black describes the tau-rho as a magical talisman that refers not simply to Christ but also to Christ Crucified.[132] This symbolism links the tau-rho back to the importance that early Christian authors placed on the cross (and the Greek Tau and Jewish Taw by association). It also indicates the importance that the symbol may have held in antiquity and for the ancient Roman viewer.

The way the tau-rho is employed in these manuscripts emphasizes that the symbol should be called a staurogram – and not a christogram – as it refers specifically to Jesus' crucifixion on the cross.[133] Importantly, it is not a monogram for Christ's name. The abbreviation might have been chosen because of its resemblance to the cross.[134] The use of the tau-rho in early Christian manuscripts reveals the significance given to Jesus' crucifixion and the cross, even before the

[128] Hurtado (2006a), 142. Hurtado does mention that there is little evidence to prove this, and he is unsure if the use of the tau-rho in these manuscripts indicates usage of the symbol beyond manuscripts at this early date.
[129] Finegan (1969), 255. Finegan speculates that the sign developed in Gnostic circles. Since the staurogram appears in manuscripts that were likely copied in Egypt, this might indicate a connection to the ankh.
[130] Hurtado (2000), 282.
[131] Hurtado (2006a), 143.
[132] Black (1970), 327.
[133] Aland (1967), 178.
[134] de Savignac (1963), 51.

time of Constantine.[135] The early importance of the tau-rho in Christian contexts cannot be overlooked.

Because of the significance placed on the cross and crucifixion in early Christian manuscripts, Hurtado argues that these manuscripts should be analyzed as artefacts rather than solely for their literary merit. This is because he believes that the manuscripts provide information about the early visual history of Christians.[136] Taking this one step further, Hurtado maintains that the tau-rho is the earliest visual representation of Jesus' crucifixion. He challenges the assumption that the tau-rho merely represents an abbreviation in Christian manuscripts; instead, he considers that the loop of the Rho perhaps functioned to signify the head of a crucified person, which fits well with the simplicity of early Christian visual art.[137] The tau, then, takes the form of the cross, as attested by Origen and Tertullian, and the addition of the rho functions to represent Jesus on that cross – in other words, as Black notes, Christ Crucified. Thus, in de Saussurian semiotic terms, the tau-rho is a different type of sign than the chi-rho. The chi-rho is purely a symbol, but the tau-rho is also an icon, a pictorial representation of Christ being crucified on a cross.

These manuscripts, which tell us something about how the tau-rho was employed as a symbol by early Christians, are not the only objects to feature a tau-rho dating to the period before Constantine. The symbol also appears in other contexts, such as on two third-century rings and an inscription from Egypt.[138] One needs to be cautious, however, as the tau-rho might

[135] Hurtado (2006a), 154. Because of its significance for early Christians, Hurtado thinks that the tau-rho should be brought to the attention of more scholars.
[136] Hurtado (2000), 281; Hurtado (2006a), 154; and Roth (2015), 126. In light of Hurtado's hypothesis, historians will have to re-consider when the crucifixion of Jesus really began to be represented in art. In contrast, Heath (2010: 541) states that the tau-rho, especially in the early centuries, remained more a verbal (linguistic) abbreviation than an image.
[137] Hurtado (2006a), 151.
[138] Longenecker (2015), 107.

appear on these rings as an abbreviation of something else, such as a proper name (as seen on coins), and therefore they cannot be relied upon as proof of Christian ownership. On the other hand, the inscription from Egypt, dated to the third century based on writing style, features a tau-rho flanked on either side by alpha and omega.[139] De Savignac suspects that this inscription – because of the inclusion of the alpha and omega – demonstrates that the tau-rho did, indeed, stand in place of Jesus' cross.[140] Sulzberger, as mentioned previously, dismisses the notion that this inscription is evidence of the early use of the tau-rho, as he suggests that these symbols could have been added to the inscription at a later date.[141] His hypothesis is difficult to prove or disprove since there is no way to securely date the inscription or (the addition of) the tau-rho. Therefore, its pre-Constantinian date cannot be confirmed. In addition, and as we shall see in future chapters, the alpha and omega appear to be a later addition to the repertoire of symbols used with either the chi-rho or the tau-rho.

The tau-rho found in a Greek inscription from a burial chamber in Rome is more securely datable and placed firmly within a Christian context (see **Figure 3.12**).[142] The funerary plaque, which provides evidence that the tau-rho precedes the use of the chi-rho in funerary inscriptions, belongs to a man named Beratius Nikatoras. The inscription, which is a mixture of Greek and Latin (in Greek letters),[143] reads:

---

[139] Black (1970), 320.
[140] de Savignac (1963), 50.
[141] Sulzberger (1925), 401.
[142] *ICG* 286 = *ILCV* 4463 = *ICUR* 15420. See also Finegan (1969: 234) and Longenecker (2015: 107), who calls the shepherd the "Good Shepherd." A second inscription with a tau-rho on a sarcophagus from a Christian cemetery in Tarraco (Spain) might pre-date the Constantinian era, but it is extremely fragmentary and has been dated through stylistic means, which are less reliable. Therefore, I have elected not to include it in my analysis (see *CIL II*.14.1726).
[143] This inscription is a mixture of Greek and Latin. See Klauser (1967), 112; Lorenzetti (2014), 148; and Quasten (1938), 52.

Βηρατιους Νικατορας | Λαζαριη και Ιουλιη | και Ονησιμη κον (= cum)[144] *φιλιους | βενεμερεντες. | ο βιος ταυτα*

Beratius Nikatoras (made this) for Lazaria and Julia and Onesime, with their well-deserving children. This is life.[145]

ICG 286 = *ILCV* 4463 = *ICUR* 15420

Along with two tau-rhos, the inscription also includes other iconography: such as an anchor, Jonah being expelled from a whale, a roaring lion, and the good shepherd. The inscription has been dated to before 275 CE, which is based not only on stylistic considerations but also because the burial is found within the Aurelian walls that encircle the city.[146] It must, therefore, pre-date the building of the walls, for intramural burial was prohibited in Rome at the time.[147] The date of the Beratius Nikatoras inscription is more secure than any of the inscriptions used as proof of the pre-Constantinian Christian use of the chi-rho and suggests that the tau-rho pre-dates the chi-rho in Christian funerary contexts.

Figure 3.12 Funerary plaque of Beratius Nikatoras found in a catacomb within the Aurelian Walls of Rome. Two tau-rhos appear among imagery of Jonah and the sea monster, a shepherd, a lion, and an anchor. Before 270 CE.
Perret (1851), Plate LXXVII. Image in public domain.

[144] For this interpretation of κον, see Klauser (1967), 112. Klauser points out that the Latin is vulgar and faulty. See also Cecchelli (1944:165), who mentions that κον can be *cum* or a suspension of *con(iux)* or *co<m>(paravit)*.
[145] The translation of this inscription is problematic because of the vulgarity of the Latin.
[146] Finegan (1969), 234.
[147] During the transition period from late antiquity to the middle ages, urban burials became more common. This only began sometime in the fifth century, until it was more-or-less a common occurrence by the sixth. For more on this development, see Costambeys (2001), 172-175. See also Lanciani (1897), 336. For a more recent discussion of the epitaph, see Bardill (2012), 163.

Furthermore, the inclusion of two tau-rhos with stock biblical images – such as the whale with Jonah, the lion (possibly a reference to Daniel), and the good shepherd – at such an early date is quite noteworthy and, as we will see in Chapter 6, such a vast repertoire of imagery on a single tomb inscription is unexpected. Even after the chi-rho is adopted into funerary contexts in Rome, it does not initially appear alongside such a variety of biblical and Christian iconography. In addition to the images on the epitaph itself, the Beratius Nikatoras inscription was discovered within a chamber containing frescoes of other biblical scenes, such as the raising of Lazarus, Daniel in the lions' den, and the feeding of the 5000, to name a few.[148] The context of the location in which the epitaph was found in addition to its early date –even though it is circumstantial and less securely dated than those inscriptions with consular dates – provide additional evidentiary support towards the pre-Constantinian Christian implementation of the tau-rho.

The tau-rho, then, pre-dates what is usually considered the first representations of the crucified Jesus, found in the late fourth century by nearly two centuries.[149] Therefore, Sulzberger's theory regarding the symbol was incorrect. It did not derive from the chi-rho, which Sulzberger considered the earlier of the two.[150] The tau-rho was not a late addition to the 'Christ monograms,' appearing sometime in the mid-fourth century. It now seems that the tau-rho was the earliest of the 'Christ monograms,' certainly being used in more securely dated Christian contexts much earlier than the chi-rho.

[148] Lanciani (1897), 336.
[149] Hurtado (2000), 280; and Hurtado (2006a), 152.
[150] Hurtado (2006a), 142-143.

3.4 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

In conclusion, I contend that both the chi-rho and tau-rho originated – or, at least, were influenced by – traditions other than Christianity. The earliest appearances of the chi-rho and the tau-rho in the material record indicate that the two symbols may have developed from common sources, most likely from the Jewish tradition. How the two symbols were employed after the advent of Christianity was nevertheless very different.

Once they had matured as symbols – independent of both their origins and each other – the chi-rho and tau-rho functioned in the centuries before Constantine in two very different ways. The chi-rho was firmly established as a non-religious 'pagan' symbol before being appropriated as a Christian symbol in the fourth century. On the other hand, the tau-rho developed early on as a Christian symbol: as the visual representation of the crucifixion of Christ. Therefore, the two symbols should not be interpreted in terms of other christograms or each other. At least in the first few centuries CE, the tau-rho was a symbol specifically used to reference the crucifixion of Jesus. In contrast, the chi-rho was more often than not a secular symbol.

I began this chapter with a quote from Goodenough on the 'inherent symbolic power' of primordial symbols and why, when they are recycled as new symbols, their meaning remains imbued with that original power. As we have seen, both devices may have held magical symbolism and, therefore, could have transferred over their 'inherent symbolic power' when they were (re)coded as symbols. This is particularly relevant to the chi-rho. Constantine may have appropriated the chi-rho because of its earlier connection to the Greek words for 'good' and 'gold,' auspicious words whose symbolic power could transfer over to the meaning of his saving sign.

Certainly, the use of the chi-rho in the fourth century is common in Christian contexts. Because of this, it is often used as a means of dating material evidence.[151] Nevertheless, the above analysis has demonstrated that this should not be the case. When they are found in the material record, the symbols ought to be considered carefully before any meaning is ascribed to them. Without a firm context, using the chi-rho as a reliable measure of dating objects is imprudent. According to Cumont:

> *Un phénomène bien connu de la transmission des symboles est le changement qui subit leur signification au cours du temps et c'est pourquoi, rigoureusement, on ne devrait interpreter ce genre de monument figurés qu'à l'aide de témoignages contemporains.*
>
> A well-known phenomenon about the transmission of symbols is the change that their meaning undergoes over the course of time and that's why, rigorously, we should not interpret this genre of relief monuments without the aid of contemporary accounts.
>
> Cumont (1942), 25

Although Cumont is discussing funerary reliefs in general, his statement is applicable to the study of the chi-rho and tau-rho. Both the symbols might have begun their existence imbuing one meaning and developed through time to have another meaning by the fourth century. While it is beneficial to see how the symbols may have originated in the centuries prior to Constantine, their prior signification should be considered with caution. The meaning that the chi-rho and tau-rho may have held for early Christians and 'pagans' could have changed by the time the symbols were appropriated under Constantine.

[151] Aland (1967), 179. Aland cautions against this.

CHAPTER FOUR

LACTANTIUS, EUSEBIUS, AND OPTATIAN: TEXTUAL UNCERTAINTIES SURROUNDING THE SYMBOL DESCRIBED IN CONSTANTINE'S VISION

> *How much time, how much intellectual labour, how many discarded versions, how much paper, how much ink has been so conspicuously consumed for this gigantic enterprise?*
>
> Levitan (1985), 266

****

This chapter examines the fourth-century sources that discuss the 'Constantinian' monogram around the time it was first adopted under Constantine. The form of the 'Constantinian' monogram is not entirely straightforward, as I have mentioned throughout the last three chapters. For this reason, this dissertation needs to present all extant mentions of the chi-rho and tau-rho from the fourth century. This chapter aims to describe the accounts of the fourth-century authors and determine how they present the 'Constantinian' monogram. It also addresses how we should reconcile conflicting information given in the primary accounts.

In the above quote, Levitan is talking about the poetry of Optatian. As we shall see when discussing the author in more detail below, modern scholars examining the Constantinian era have often dismissed his work, questioning its intellectual contribution to early fourth-century scholarship. Regardless of the merit of his poetry, Optatian is one of the few ancient sources to mention the 'saving sign' given to Constantine before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. For Optatian, the 'saving sign' was a chi-rho, the image of which appears in his poetry. In addition to Optatian, both Lactantius and Eusebius describe the symbol in some detail. Lactantius and Eusebius, as we shall see, are generally recognized as the authors of two key texts surrounding the adoption of the symbol by Constantine. This chapter, therefore, provides an examination of

the texts of Lactantius. Eusebius, and Optatian. First, I present a historical examination of each author and his work, followed by a translation and analysis of the relevant passages.

4.1 LACTANTIUS AND *DE MORTIBUS PERSECUTORUM*

4.1.1 Lactantius

Little is known about the life of L. Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius, except for some information that can be gleaned from two mentions of him by the fourth-century Christian author Jerome and a few brief mentions he himself makes in his own works.[1] According to Saint Jerome,[2]

> *Firmianus, qui et Lactantius, Arnobii discipulus, sub Diocletiano principe accitus cum Flavio grammatico, cuius* 'De medicinalibus' *versu conpositi extant libri, Nicomediae rhetoricam docuit ac penuria discipulorum ob Graecam videlicet civitatem ad scribendum se contulit. Habemus eius* Symposium*, quod adulescentulus scripsit Africae, et* 'Οδοιπορικόν *de Africa usque Nicomediam, hexametris scriptum versibus, et alium librum, qui inscribitur* Grammaticus*, et pulcherrimum* De ira Dei*, et* Institutionum divinarum adversum gentes *libros septem, et* Ἐπιτομήν *eiusdem operis, in libro uno ἀκεφάλῳ, et* Ad Asclepiadem *libros duos,* De persecutione *librum unum,* Ad Probum *epistularum libros quattuor,* Ad Severum *epistularum libros duos,* Ad Demetrianum*, auditorem suum, epistularum libros duos et ad eundem* De opificio Dei vel formatione hominis *librum unum. Hic in extrema senectute magister Caesaris Crispi, filii Constantini, in Gallia fuit, qui postea a patre interfectus est.*
>
> Firmianus, also called Lactantius, a disciple of Arnobius, summoned to Nicomedia under Diocletian, along with the grammarian Flavius, whose verse compositions *On Medicinal Matters* are extant, taught rhetoric there; but because of the scarcity of pupils, in that it was a Greek city, he switched to writing. We have surviving his *Symposium*, which he wrote as a young man in Africa; an 'Οδοιπορικόν (*Travel Guide*), from Africa to Nicomedia, composed in hexameters; another book entitled, *The Grammarian*; another fine work *On the Anger of God*; seven books, *Divine Institutes against the Pagans*; and an Ἐπιτομήν (*Epitome)*, of the same work in a book ἀκεφάλῳ, without a heading; and *To Asclepiades*, two books; *On Persecution*, one book; *To Probus*, four books of letters; *To Severus*, two books of letters; *To Demetrianus*, his disciple, two books of letters; and to the same, *On the Workmanship of God, or On the*

[1] Even Lactantius' *nomen* has been disputed, either being Caelius or Caecilius. See Bowen and Garnsey (2003), 1, fn. 1.
[2] The Latin text is from Richardson (1896) and the English translation is from Halton (1999).

> *Formation of Man*, one book. In extreme old age he became the teacher in Gaul of Caesar Crispus, son of Constantine, who was later put to death by his father.
>
> Jerome, *De Vir. Ill.* 80

From this passage, we learn that Lactantius was born in North Africa and was a student of Arnobius of Sicca (modern El-Kef, Tunisia).[3] While still in North Africa,[4] Lactantius became prolific enough at teaching rhetoric that he was summoned to Nicomedia by the emperor Diocletian, whereupon he took up writing. His exact birth date is unknown,[5] but he must have been sufficiently established by the end of the 3rd century to be called to the eastern capital of the Empire. We also know he had reached "extreme old age" by the time he was a tutor to Constantine's son Crispus, who died in 326 CE, which puts his birth sometime in the middle of the third century.

The details of Lactantius' conversion to Christianity are also unknown, although Leadbetter hypothesizes that it occurred only after he arrived in Nicomedia.[6] It must have occurred sometime before the start of the Great Persecution under Diocletian in 303 CE since one of his major works – the *Divine Institutes,* written slightly before or after he left Nicomedia in reaction to the persecution – responds to the persecution and some of its foremost perpetrators.[7] By Constantine's conversion to Christianity in 312 CE, Lactantius had already established himself as a Christian apologist. He must have been known well enough in the imperial court to be made the tutor of Constantine's eldest son.

---

[3] For a recent publication that discusses Lactantius' North African roots, including possible linguistic origins of his name, see Whilhite (2017: 181-188). See also Nicholson (2004: 261).
[4] The location Lactantius taught is unknown, but Bowen and Garnsey (2003: 1) speculate that he would have taught in Carthage, as it was the capital of North Africa and a centre for learning.
[5] McDonald (1955), xi.
[6] Leadbetter (2009), 7. For more discussion surrounding the date of his conversion, see Leadbetter (2009), 22, fn. 35.
[7] Schott (2008), 80-81.

4.1.2 *De Mortibus Persecutorum (On the Deaths of the Persecutors)*

Just as little is known about the composition of *De Mortibus Persecutorum* as is known about the author himself. According to Saint Jerome, the work was called *De Persecutione* – which will be addressed below – and was one of several religious treatises that Lactantius wrote concerning Christianity. The treatise is a defence of the emperor Constantine and God, while at the same time, it is a condemnation of past emperors, like Diocletian, who had oppressed Christianity.[8] The work sets itself out not only as an apology of the newly sanctioned Christian religion but also as an endorsement for the religious changes occurring at an empire-wide level under the first Christian emperor, Constantine.

Lactantius wrote *De Mortibus Persecutorum* sometime after he began his employment as tutor to Crispus in Trier, a position that may have begun as early as 310 CE.[9] Since *De Mortibus Persecutorum* mentions the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, which took place in 312 CE, the work was written sometime after the battle.[10] A *terminus ante quem* for the treatise can be postulated as well, as it does not mention Constantine's first civil war with his co-emperor Licinius, which was fought in 316-317 CE.[11] Therefore, Lactantius likely wrote the treatise between 312 and 316 CE. With these dates in mind, we can say that the Battle of the Milvian Bridge would have, at most, occurred four years prior and would still have been fresh in the imperial court's

[8] Shelton (2014), 29.
[9] Bowen and Garnsey (2003), 3. Creed (1984: xxxiv) believes that *De Mortibus Persecutorum* was written (or, at the very least, published) in the western part of the empire.
[10] Scholars generally date the work between 312 and 316 CE. See Creed (1984), xxxiv-xxxv; and Palanque (1966), 711-716. Barnes (2014: 9) argues that Lactantius wrote *De Mortibus Persecutorum* while in Nicomedia, as a subject of Licinius, in 314-315 CE. Fox (1986: 614) agrees that the account was written in the east. Creed (1984: xxxiv-xxxv), however, who has examined the work thoroughly, states that while Lactantius is not overtly hostile towards Constantine's co-emperor Licinius in *De Mortibus Persecutorum,* he is not overly positive either. While examining the work, Creed notes that Licinius is the only emperor that Lactantius talks about that is never given a qualifying (either positive or negative) adjective. He believes that the indifferent attitude towards Licinius indicates that even if Lactantius had returned to Licinius' part of the empire in the period of 311-313 CE, he would have been in Constantine's court when writing *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, or, at least, before it was published.
[11] Omissi (2018), 143-144. It was once thought that the civil war between Licinius and Constantine occurred in 314-315 CE (see Creed 1984: xxix).

memory. Therefore, when Lactantius was writing, he would have been close – both temporally and spatially as the tutor to Crispus – to the people and events he was describing.

The abbot Raymond de Foulhac found the only surviving manuscript of *De Mortibus Persecutorum* in 1678 while doing an inventory of codices in the Benedictine abbey of St Pierre in Moissac (Tarn-et-Garonne), located in southern France. There he found 16 folios from a previously unknown manuscript – now called the *Colbertinus* in the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris (number 2627*)* – which dated to the eleventh century.[12] The manuscript, which was somewhat damaged because of the conditions in which it had been stored, was titled LUCII CECILII INCIPIT LIBER AD DONATUM CONFESSOREM DE MORTIBUS PERSECUTORUM and was quickly published in 1679 by Etienne Baluze. He identified the work as Lactantius' lost *De Persecutione,* as mentioned by Saint Jerome. The ascription of this work to Lactantius was contested over the next two centuries, and it remained controversial until the end of the nineteenth century when most scholars approved of assigning the authorship to Lactantius.[13] The complexities of attributing *De Mortibus Persecutorum* to Lactantius aside, the work itself has brought about much discussion, in particular the passage in chapter XLIV detailing the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, to which we will now turn.

4.1.3 Chapter XLIV

The chapter begins with the civil war having just broken out between Constantine and Maxentius. Constantine has gathered his forces to the neighbourhood of Rome and positioned them across from the Milvian Bridge. That night,

[12] An analysis of the manuscript dates it to the eleventh century. See Creed (1984), xlvi and Städele (2003), 8-9. Städele elaborates that three scribes copied the manuscript using a Visigothic model.
[13] Städele (2003), 8-9. See also McDonald (1965), 122. In 1966, Palanque wrote that the debate about the attribution of the work to Lactantius was no longer in contention. However, as Rougé (1978: 22, see in particular fn. 28) discussed in the 1970s, the debate occasionally reappears in scholarship, depending on the environment of the discourse.

> *Commonitus est in quiete Constantius ut caeleste signum dei notaret in scutis atque ita proelium committeret. Fecit ut iussus est et transuersa*[14] *X littera, summo capite circumflexo, Christum in scutis notat. Quo signo armatus exercitus capit ferrum.*
>
> Constantine was reminded in his sleep that he should mark the celestial sign of God on the shields and thus engage in battle. He did as he was ordered and, with the letter X placed crosswise/sideways, the topmost extreme having been curved, marked Christ on the shields. With which sign the army, clad in armour, took up their sword.
>
> Lactant*. De Mort. Pers.* 44

As we shall see, this passage has been extensively debated among scholars and is still contested today. Rougé calls it: "the most celebrated passage of *the mortibus persecutorum,* the one that made the most ink flow."[15] The reason that so much ink has been spilt discussing the passage is to argue about which symbol, precisely, Lactantius is describing. I interpret, as does Marrou (see below), the sign mentioned in the passage – as initially transcribed from the eleventh-century manuscript –not as a chi-rho, as some have argued, but a tau-rho. The tau-rho is the symbol one gets by turning an X on its side and curving the top portion (Ꝑ).[16] As the passage stands from our one extant manuscript, it cannot be understood as a chi-rho.

Nevertheless, arguments have been put forth since the 18th century that the scribe copying *De Mortibus Persecutorum* made a transmission error while working on this portion of the text. Several transcribers and translators took it upon themselves to emend this supposed mistake by adding an 'I' to the passage, thus altering the Latin to *transuersa*

[14] Much of the argument surrounding the composition of the symbols depends on the meaning of *transversus*. In the *OLD*, the word can be defined as: 'lying across'; 'from side to side'; 'placed crosswise'; 'moving across or at right-angles to a stated or implied course'; and 'sideways.' When talking of roads, it can mean: 'running across the line of the direct way'; or 'extended across the line of a moving person or object.' As we will see below, some translations use the meaning 'extending across the line' to add the letter Rho to the symbol. However, the adjective *transversus* does not ever seem to imply that anything is being 'added' to the noun it is modifying.

[15] *Au plus célèbre passage du de mortibus persecutorum, à celui qui a fait couler le plus d'encre* (Rougé 1978: 19).

[16] Although the Visigothic scribe may have made a mistake in their transmission of the script (or even copied a version that was already corrupted), we can only base our arguments on the avaialble evidence. One query that needs to be addressed is why Lactantius would not have described the symbol as a T(au) rather than an X(i) placed on its side. Lactantius may have chosen his wording carefully, not only because the chi could be symbolically connected to Christ's name in Greek, but also because the letter X already had an established Christian symbolism. See also Garipzanov (2018), 52.

X littera I. The correction has been traced as far back as 1782 to Lord Hailes writing in Edinburgh,[17] and later scholars continued to use this alteration to the passage in their translations. For example, in 1886, Coxe translated the passage to read, "he did as he had been commanded and he marked on their shields the letter X, *with a perpendicular line drawn through it* (emphasis my own) and turned round thus (☧) at the top, being the cipher of CHRIST."[18] The addition of the 'I' to the passage gave those studying early fourth-century Christianity a convenient way to align the account given by Lactantius with that of Eusebius (see below).

Adding credence to the emendation made by some scholars is the observation that the text of *De Mortibus Persecutorum* is unreliable in many places. Creed mentions that the scribe who copied the text seemed to do so without much care and proper names, in particular, appear to be distorted.[19] These scribal errors are in addition to the damage done to the manuscript because of the poor storage conditions it had been placed in for centuries. For these reasons, it seemed plausible to some that the passage had been altered in some way – through error or nature – from the original version Lactantius intended. Perhaps, as Rougé recommends, the whole line should be removed if, indeed, a scribe altered the text, as this would eliminate the need for such speculation.[20] However, removing – or even ignoring – the passage is not necessary if we take the passage at face value.

Another theory is that Lactantius made a mistake in his description of the sign of Christ because he was not as concerned about giving the physical description of the symbol

[17] Rougé (1978), 20.
[18] Fletcher (1886), 318. See also: Rougé (1978: 19-21) who gives a detailed discussion of the addition of the 'I' to the passage; and Moreau (1954: I.127). Burgeon (2019: 8) uses the emendation and states that the symbol Lactantius describes is an iota-chi.
[19] Creed (1984), xlvi. Creed elaborates by saying that there often seems to be confusion between the names of Maximianus, Maximinus and Maxentius. See also Städele (2003), 78.
[20] Rougé (1978), 22. Rougé is speaking somewhat facetiously and offering this as an easy solution to the problem.

as he was in explaining the meaning behind it.[21] While this cannot be ruled out as a possibility, it is unlikely that Lactantius would have made such a mistake, especially considering his position at court. Furthermore, it would have been precarious for Lactantius – if he were at all superstitious – to knowingly tamper with the talismanic symbol that had worked so effectively as a protective charm for Constantine, and the Roman army, against his enemies.

Despite these objections, this emendation to the text continued to be used throughout the 1900s and was formally credited to Henri Grégoire.[22] Following Grégoire's suggestion, Jacques Moreau, in his critical edition on *De Mortibus Persecutorum* with commentary, added the alteration to the text and remarked that the sign that Lactantius was describing was a chi-rho, citing the symbols' appearance on Constantinian coinage as evidence.[23] He explains that the chi-rho, since it could already be found on the currency, would have been well known to Lactantius and his audience around the time *De Mortibus Persecutorum* was published. While these are compelling observations, the presence of the chi-rho on circulating coinage when the text was released does not necessarily indicate that this was the symbol Lactantius wished to describe. Furthermore, as demonstrated in the previous Chapter, the tau-rho was already in use by the third century. As a Christian scribal abbreviation, Lactantius may have interpreted the tau-rho as a symbol for Christ.[24] Lastly, if we posit a date of completion for *De Mortibus Persecutorum* of circa 316 CE (see above), then Lactantius' audience would not have been accustomed to seeing the chi-rho

[21] Drake (2000), 202. In an earlier book, Drake (1976: 72) questions whether Constantine would have allowed Lactantius to make such a mistake with a symbol so sacred to him. He concludes that Lactantius must have meant a chi-rho.
[22] See Bardill (2011), 161; Barnes (2014), 79; Creed (1984), 119, fn. 9; and Rougé (1978), 19.
[23] See Moreau (1954), II.436. The symbol is found engraved on Constantine's helmet. This coin will be discussed further in Chapter 5.
[24] Creed (1984), 119, fn. 9.

on the coinage because it had not yet been minted on *circulating* coinage, as we shall see in Chapter 5. There is no need to force an interpretation of the symbol as a chi-rho based on the scarcity of evidence of the existence of the tau-rho as a Christian symbol on the currency as the empire had only recently come under the control of a Christian emperor.

A few years after Moreau's publication, Henri Irénée Marrou objected to adding an 'I,' arguing that classical Latin would not support the addition of an 'I' to the text. He asserts that the word *transuersa* is always used in classical texts – a frequent formula in Cicero – to mean 'turned around' or 'crosswise,' which is still how transverse is used in modern English, and not 'to traverse' or 'to cut/lie across.'[25] Marrou adds that if Lactantius had intended to describe a chi-rho, he could have simply referred to a Rho – as Eusebius did in the *Vita Constantini* – rather than the convoluted "I with its top bent." Rougé agrees with Marrou; adding the manuscript itself does not suggest that the section of the text is missing anything. In the manuscript we have, there is no space available for the addition of an 'I.'[26] Although this would not account for a scribal copying error, it does mean that an 'I' was never a part of our extant manuscript. Therefore, an examination of the eleventh-century manuscript and a close reading of the extant Latin that we have available to us offers compelling arguments against adding an 'I' to the passage. Moreau, who argues for the addition of an 'I' to align Lactantius' description with the symbol found on Constantinian coinage and mentioned in Eusebius' account, does not employ this type of in-depth research.

[25] Marrou (1978) 403-406. For more information on how Cicero uses the word *transversa* see fn. 11 in Marrou. The addition of the 'I' may have been supported, according to Marrou, had Lactantius used the word '*traiecta*' (to cross), '*transmissa'* (to cross over), or '*transfixa'* (to piece through). The word '*transversa'* has to follow the etymology of the words it is composed of: '*verto*' (to turn) and '*trans*' (over/across).
[26] Rougé (1978), 20-21

In the last few decades, the chi-rho has continued to be interpreted as the symbol that Lactantius was describing, and the addition of a vertical stroke intersecting the 'X' has remained popular.[27] In 2003, Weiss argued for the emendation in order to link the *Panegyric of 310* with the accounts of both Lactantius and Eusebius.[28] He maintains that the *caeleste signum dei* in Lactantius' description refers to an actual solar phenomenon, later also detailed by Eusebius, that Constantine witnessed. After the original vision in 310 CE, which the emperor interpreted as being sent from Apollo, Constantine believed that the god was his personal benefactor, so he placed a six-sided star on his soldiers' shields. A few years later, before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, Constantine received another vision. Instead of Apollo, he attributed the vision to the Christian God and began to use the chi-rho. Barnes, in 2014, supported Weiss' argument, saying that this revision of Lactantius supports the varying accounts of divine visions that Constantine had within a few years of each other.[29] A question that remains is: should the evidence that we have and the accounts passed down to us allow for this reading of *De Mortibus Persecutorum*? Weiss' suggestion relies on too many speculations to be convincing. Furthermore, as we shall encounter in the section on Optatian below, the early fourth century was a period of religious negotiation and fluidity, so we need not suppose that Lactantius and Eusebius are

[27] For a few examples, see Harries (2012), 110; Lenski (2016), 53; Potter (2013), 143; Van Dam (2011), 117; Van Dam (2017), 75; and Weiss (2003), 246.
[28] Weiss (2003), 246. See also Ch. 1.2.2. In the *Panegyric of 310*, Constantine also received a vision, which he attributed to the god Apollo. A discussion of the Panegyric in full detail is beyond the scope of this dissertation. For more information, see Rodgers (2012), 289-334.
[29] Barnes (2014), 79-80. Gaspar (1993: 209-210) reaches a different conclusion than Weiss with a similar type of analysis. She believes that Lactantius and Eusebius describe two different aspects of the same event through their own understanding of the event. According to Gaspar, Lactantius focused on the astrological symbolism of the battle (and described the tau-rho), whereas Eusebius highlighted the apotropaic function of the *labarum* through its association with Cretan axe-cult. While this interpretation is far-fetched, I agree with Gaspar's conclusion that the two authors described the same event with the knowledge they had available to them.

describing the same symbol. Before discussing this further, I will now turn to an examination of Eusebius' account of the events of 312 CE.

4.2 EUSEBIUS AND *VITA CONSTANTINI*

4.2.1 Eusebius

More is known about the life of Eusebius of Caesarea than is known about Lactantius, but his biographical information is still limited to a few sources. Like Lactantius, his biography also appears in Saint Jerome, who tells us,[30]

> *Eusebius, Caesareae Palaestinae episcopus, in Scripturis Divinis studiosissimus et bibliothecae divinae cum Pamphilo martyre diligentissimus pervestigator, edidit infinita volumina, de quibus haec sunt:* Εὐαγγελικῆς ἀποδείξεως, *libri viginti,* Εὐαγγελικῆς προπαρασκευῆς *libri quindecim, [*Θεοφανείας, *libri quinque,]* Ecclesiasticae historiae *libri decem,* Chronicorum canonum omnimoda historia *et eorum* Ἐπιτομή*...et multa alia. Floruit maxime sub Constantino imperatore et Constantio, et ob amicitiam Pamphili martyris ab eo cognomentum sortitus est.*
>
> Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, extremely industrious in the study of the Sacred Scriptures, and, with Pamphilus the martyr a diligent researcher of the sacred library, published numerous works, including the following: Εὐαγγελικῆς ἀποδείξεως (*Demonstratio evangelica),* twenty books; Εὐαγγελικῆς προπαρασκευῆς (*Praeparatio evangelica)*, fifteen books; Θεοφανείας (*Theophany)*, five books; *Ecclesiastical History*, ten books; *Universal History of Chronological Tables,* and an Ἐπιτομή (*Epitome)* of these...and many other works. He lived mainly in the reign of Constantine the emperor and Constantius, and because of his friendship for Pamphilus the martyr was called Eusebius Pamphili.
>
> Jerome, *De Vir. Ill.* 81

From Jerome, we learn that Eusebius was the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine and a prolific writer who worked towards promoting Christianity. He was born around 260 CE, a date that derives from the contemporaries that Eusebius mentions in his works.[31] Eusebius, then, was a contemporary of Lactantius, and both authors would have been writing their treatises around the

[30] The Latin text is from Richardson (1896), 43, and the English translation is from Halton (1999), 113-114.
[31] See Barnes (2014), 9; and Lake (1926), ix.

same time. Although Eusebius's birth location is unknown, he must have been living in Caesarea for some time, long enough to develop a close friendship with Pamphilus. He was imprisoned during Diocletian's Great Persecution and was made bishop of Caesarea sometime after the persecution had ended.[32] Eusebius, who lived through the persecution and yet remained a devout Christian, became an influential member of the Christian Church.

Eusebius wrote many works on biblical scholarship, and, like Lactantius, he was a Christian apologist. Origen's theology influenced him. In the third century, Origen had spent the end of his life in Caesarea, and Eusebius had inherited his library.[33] As Jerome tells us, Eusebius discusses Christian scripture in several works. Two of his surviving works focus more on contemporary history, the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, a history of the Church that spans from the beginning of Christianity up to his own time, and the *Vita Constantini*, which details the life of the first Christian emperor, Constantine.

Since he was the bishop of Caesarea, Eusebius lived in the Eastern part of the empire. Therefore, he only became a subject of Constantine after Constantine's defeat of his co-emperor Licinius in 324 CE. Having been born around the middle of the 3rd century, Eusebius would have been already quite old by the time he became influential to, or conversely influenced by, the emperor. Scholars have only begun to make this observation in recent decades.[34] Barnes elaborates that it had been assumed that Eusebius was close to Constantine, as that is how he portrays his relationship with the emperor in the *Vita Constantini*. However, it seems likely that Eusebius did not even meet the emperor until he attended the council of Nicaea in 325 CE when

[32] Lake (1926), ix-x. Although often called 'The Palestinian,' this probably referred to his episcopal see rather than the place of his birth. Pamphilus was a native of Phoenicia and became a Christian martyr during the Great Persecution.
[33] Cameron and Hall (1999), 2.
[34] See Barnes (2014), 10; and Holloway (2004), 2. Holloway still concludes that the emperor and Eusebius knew each other on intimate terms.

an ecumenical council of representatives gathered to decide the nature of Christ and Christ's relationship with God.[35] Furthermore, Barnes estimates that Eusebius could have met the emperor on no more than four occasions, all of which would have occurred in the presence of other bishops.[36] This conclusion impacts the way we study Constantine, particularly Eusebius' knowledge of the chi-rho as mentioned in Book One, Chapters 28-32. If Eusebius had only conversed with the emperor in person on a few occasions and possibly never while they were alone, he might have been mistaken about some aspects of Constantine's vision and the subsequent designation of the chi-rho as the saving sign of Christ.

Like his birth, the exact date of Eusebius' death is unknown, although he may have died shortly after [the death of] the emperor Constantine in 337 CE. His successor, Acacius, was present as the bishop of Caesarea at the Synod of Antioch in 341 CE.[37] Eusebius, therefore, must have died sometime before then – around 340 CE – and, when he did, he left the *Vita Constantini* incomplete. An editor, possibly his successor Acacius, published the work after his death.[38] The *Vita Constantini* is one of Eusebius' most influential works, and it is a critical source on the emperor Constantine. I will now discuss this work in more detail.

4.2.2 *Vita Constantini (The Life of Constantine)*

As mentioned, the *Vita Constantini* was unfinished at Eusebius's death, which provides a *terminus ante quem* of ca. 340 CE for when it was written. Scholars disagree, however, on when it was begun. Some scholars, such as Pasquali, have argued that the entire work was written after Constantine's death in 337 CE since it not only details the emperor's death but also describes the

[35] Cameron and Hall (1999), 3.
[36] Barnes (1981: 266) also states that it is unlikely that letters were exchanged very frequently between the two.
[37] Lake (1926), xiii.
[38] Barnes (2014), 10. Cameron and Hall (1999: 3), who place the date of his death to 339 CE, also state that the work was unfinished and unrevised when Eusebius died. The fact that Eusebius does not mention the wars between Constantine's sons in 340 CE solidifies that his death occurred sometime before 341 CE.

empire as having been split between his three remaining sons.[39] Others, like Barnes, believe that Eusebius started collecting material and writing a few years before 337 CE, adding to his work as events unfolded.[40] In any case, the work was compiled nearly two decades after Lactantius wrote his treatise.

Unlike *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, there is a more extended textual history of the transmission of the *Vita Constantini,* which survives in more than one manuscript and because of this, there are several variants that have come down to us. The oldest and possibly the best-preserved is from the 10th century CE.[41] Several copies have also survived from the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries. In addition, textual critics can scrutinize specific passages by using comparisons from Eusebius' own works where he quotes from his earlier texts. The third source of information about the *Vita Constantini* is quotes taken from Eusebian texts found in the works of fifth-century Church historians, such as Socrates.[42] Both the multitude of versions that have come down to us from antiquity and the quotes found in other primary sources help textual critics in their attempt to reconstruct the archetype of the codex.

Cameron and Hall call the *Vita Constantini* the most significant work on the life of the emperor Constantine.[43] Despite this, or maybe because of it, scholars once criticized the work.[44] The three primary sources of contention were: the authenticity of the attribution of the work to Eusebius of Caesarea; the potential alteration, or later addition, to some of the accounts about the

[39] Pasquali (1910), 386. For a detailed summary of the scholarship on the subject, see Cameron and Hall (1999), 9-10.
[40] Barnes (1989), 265; and Cameron and Hall (1999), 3 and 9-10. Drake (1988: 36) argues for a start date of 335 CE for the *Vita Constantini* after analyzing Eusebius' other works and the mention Eusebius makes in another speech about wanting to write a biography of the emperor.
[41] Cameron and Hall (1999), 51.
[42] Cameron and Hall (1999), 51.
[43] Cameron and Hall (1999), 1.
[44] For a discussion of past scholarship, see Cameron and Hall (1999), 4-9 and 27-34. See also: Bitton-Ashkelony (2005), 24.

emperor Constantine; and the reliability of Eusebius as a historian. Regarding the first point, the *Vita Constantini* – since it is similar in style to other Eusebeian works – has now been securely attributed to Eusebius.[45] The second criticism surrounds the authenticity of some details about the life of Constantine. Some earlier scholars supposed that scribes in the middle ages had added interpolations to the text.[46] This observation was particularly applied to the section of the manuscript describing the vision of Constantine (see below), although it has now been successfully refuted.[47] Although the work has been attributed to Eusebius, and the authenticity of the passage about Constantine's vision can be traced back to Eusebius as well, it does not necessarily mean that the information found within the *Vita Constantini* is accurate.

The reliability of Eusebius as a source has also come under close scrutiny. The nineteenth-century historian Jacob Burckhardt was one scholar to voice his skepticism. He describes Eusebius as,

> …the first thoroughly dishonest historian of antiquity. His tactic which enjoyed a brilliant success in his own day and throughout the Middle Ages, consisted in making the first great protector of the Church at all costs an ideal of humanity according to his lights, and above all an ideal for future rulers…But Constantine was a more honourable man than Eusebius: he rather allowed these events to transpire than intervened actively on their behalf, and as regards to his own personal conviction, he enjoined definite beliefs upon his subjects as little as did Napoleon in his concordat.
>
> Burckhardt (1949), 272

Besides the criticism of Eusebius, this quote also highlights that Burckhardt was pursuing his own agenda.[48] He is skeptical of Eusebius as a protector of the Church and is eager to distance the author from the 'true' emperor Constantine. Later scholarship, however, has tended to move

[45] Barnes (1989), 96; and Cameron and Hall (1999), 4.
[46] See Barnes's article "Panegyric, history and hagiography in Eusebius' *Life of Constantine"* for a deconstruction of the theories put forth by earlier scholars. See also Cameron & Hall (1999), 5-6.
[47] Barnes (2014), 11; and Cameron and Hall (1999), 6. A papyrus from Egypt, written around the time of Eusebius, preserves the portion of the text describing Constantine's vision. The arguments for other questionable passages remain inconclusive.
[48] See Barnes (2014) 10. Barnes concludes that Burckhardt was biased by the situation of his own times and needed to discredit Eusebius as a source.

away from this harsh criticism of Eusebius.[49] Drake argues that although unconcerned with precision in chronology, Eusebius never seems to falsify evidence knowingly.[50] One could say that Eusebius strove to create as authentic a biography of the emperor Constantine as he could with the information he had at his disposal. Nevertheless, it is apparent that Eusebius, as a Christian bishop writing about the first Christian emperor, is inevitably biased.[51] Whether done purposefully or not, Eusebius' work was written when Christianity was growing in popularity, and it would have been a promotion of the religion that he supported, which ought to be kept in mind when reading the *Vita Constantini*.

4.2.3 Book One, Chapters XXVIII – XXXII

The chapter preceding those that describe Constantine's vision sets the stage for the emperor's battle with the tyrant Maxentius. Eusebius describes how Constantine has seen several people die while trying to stop the army of Maxentius, even though a multitude of gods supported them. At that point, Constantine decides that he should only worship the God that supported his father.

> *'Ανεκαλεῖτο δῆτα ἐν εὐχαῖς τοῦτον ἀντιβολῶν καὶ ποτνιώμενος, φῆναι αὐτῷ ἑαυτὸν 'οστις εἴη, καὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δεξιὰν τοῖς προκειμένοις ἐπορέξαι. Εὐχομένῳ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ λιπαρῶς ἱκετεύοντι τῷ βασιλεῖ, θεοσημία τις ἐπιφαίνεται παραδοξοτάτη· ἣν τάχα μὲν ἄλλου λέγοντος, οὐ ῥᾴδιον ἦν ἀποδέξασθαι, αὐτοῦ δὲ τοῦ νικητοῦ βασιλέως, τοῖς τὴν γραφὴν διηγουμένοις ἡμῖν μακροῖς ὕστερον χρόνοις, ὅτε ἠξιώθημεν τῆς αὐτοῦ γνώσεώς τε καὶ ὁμιλίας, ἐξαγγείλαντος, ὅρκοις τε πιστωσαμένου τὸν λόγον, τίς ἂν ἀμφιβάλοι μὴ οὐχὶ πιστεῦσαι τῷ διηγήματι; μάλισθ' ὅτε καὶ ὁ μετὰ ταῦτα χρόνος ἀληθῆ τῷ λόγῳ παρέσχε τὴν μαρτυρίαν. Ἀμφι μεσημβρινὰς ἡλίου ὥρας, ἤδη τῆς ἡμέρας ἀποκλινούσης, αὐτοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰδεῖν ἔφη ἐν αὐτῷ οὐρανῷ ὑπερ(κε)ίμενον τοῦ ἡλίου σταυροῦ τρόπαιον, ἐκ φωτὸς συνιστάμενον, γραφήν τε αὐτῷ συνῆφθαι, λέγουσαν· τούτῳ νίκα. Θάμβος δ`ἐπὶ τῷ θεάματι κρατῆσαι αὐτόν τε καὶ τὸ στρατιωτικὸν ἅπαν, ὅ δὴ στελλομένῳ ποι πορειαν συνείπετό τε καὶ θεωρὸν ἐγίνετο θαύματος.*

[49] Barnes (1981), 266; and Cameron and Hall (1999), 4-6.
[50] Drake (1976), 9. Drake's assessment of truth versus fallacy is outdated and anachronistic. Ancient sources saw the "truth" differently than we do, more in the sense of 'impartiality' rather than 'objectivity.' For more on this subject, see Marincola (2003: 158-174); Mason (2011: 1644-1645); and Woodman (1988: 83-95).
[51] Bardill (2012: 3-7) cautions against solely using Eusebius as a source and recommends that we study him alongside other primary sources and material evidence. Burgeon (2019: 2-15) is also critical of Eusebius. This dissertation strives to enhance our knowledge of the chi-rho and tau-rho by including more material evidence and not relying solely on Eusebius' narrative.

Καὶ δὴ διαπορεῖν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἔλεγε, τί ποτε εἴη τὸ φάσμα. Ἐνθυμουμένῳ δ᾽αὐτῷ καὶ ἐπὶ πολὺ λογιζομένῳ νὺξ ἐπῆλθε καταλαβοῦσα· ἐνταῦθα δὴ ὑπνοῦντι αὐτῷ, τὸν Χριστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ σὺν τῷ φανέντι κατ᾽ οὐρανὸν σημείῳ ὀφθῆναί τε καὶ παρακελεύσασθαι, μίμημα ποισάμενον τοῦ κατ᾽ οὐρανὸν ὀφθέντος σημείου, τούτῳ πρὸς τὰς τῶν πολεμίων συμβολὰς ἀλεξήματι χρῆσθαι.

Ἅμα δ᾽ἡμέρᾳ διαναστὰς, τοῖς φίλοις ἐξηγόρευε τὸ ἀπόρρητον. Κάπειτα χρυσοῦ καὶ λίθων πολυτελῶν δημιουργοὺς συγκαλέσας, μέσος αὐτὸς καθιζάνει, καὶ τοῦ σημείου τὴν σημείου τὴν εἰκόνα φράζει, ἀπομιμεῖσθαί τε αὐτὴν χρυσῷ καὶ πολυτελέσι λίθοις διεκελεύετο ὅ δὴ καὶ ἡμᾶς ὀφθαλμοῖς ποτε συνέβη παραλαβεῖν.

Ἦν δὲ τοιῷδε σχήματι κατεσκευασμένον· ὑψηλὸν δόρυ χρυσῷ κατημφιεσμένον, κέρας εἶχεν ἐγκάρσιον, σταυροῦ σχήματι πεποιημένον· ἄνω δὲ πρὸς ἄκρῳ τοῦ παντὸς, στέφανος ἐκ λίθων πολθτελῶν καὶ χρυσοῦ σθμπεπλεγμένος κατεστήπικτο, καθ᾽ οὗ τῆς σωτηρίου ἐπηγορίας τὸ σύμβολον, δύο στοιχεῖα τὸ Χριστοῦ παραδηλοῦντα ὄνομα, διὰ τῶν πρώτων ὑπεσήμαινον χαρακτήρων, χιαζομένου τοῦ ρ κατὰ τὸ μεσαίτατον· ἃ δὴ καὶ κατὰ τοῦ κράνους φέρειν εἴωθε κἀν τοῖς μετὰ ταῦτα χρόωοις ὁ βασιλεύς.

Certainly, he began to repeatedly invoke this [god] with prayers, entreating and imploring that he reveal himself to him, whoever he might be, and to stretch out his right hand towards [helping] the events that had been set forth. While he was praying about these things and persistently entreating, a most marvellous heavenly sign appeared to the supplicating emperor: perhaps if another person was speaking, it would not be an easy thing to accept, but since the victorious emperor himself (a long time after, at the time when I had been deemed worthy of his acquaintance and company) reported the account, after affirming it with oaths, to me, the one who is describing this story, who could indeed doubt to trust the tale? And most of all when the time after these events provided the true testimony for the account.

Around the time of the noonday sun, when the day was already moving towards evening, he said that he saw, with his own eyes in the sky itself, a trophy of a cross, having been placed above the sun, formed from light, and connected with it was writing which said: 'by this conquer.' Amazement at the sight lay hold of him and the whole army, which was accompanying him, since he had started out on a journey somewhere, and became spectators of the wonder.

What is more he said that he was in doubt within himself about what the sign from heaven might be. Night came, while he was pondering and considering it for a long time, and overtook him: then, as he was sleeping, the Christ of God appeared (to him) with the sign which had materialized down from the sky and advised that a copy of the sign, which had been seen in the sky, be made and to use this as a protection against the attacks of the enemy.

At daylight, he awoke and told his friends the secret. Then he convened skilled workers of gold and expensive stones, sitting down among them, and told them the semblance of the symbol, and he directed them to copy it in gold and expensive stones faithfully: which, indeed, it came to pass that even I perceived (it) with my eyes myself once.

It was made in such a shape. An upright pole covered in gold was holding a transverse bar, and it made the shape of a cross. Higher, near the top of it all, a

wreath that was entwined with expensive stones and gold was firmly fixed, upon it the symbol of the saving monogram, two letters indicating the name of Christ, signifying by the first letters, *rho* positioned across *chi*: which indeed the emperor was accustomed to carry on his helmet in the times after these events.[52]

Eusebius, *Vit. Const.* 1. 28-31

The passage continues,[53]

τοῦ δὲ πλαγίου κέρως τοῦ κατὰ τὸ δόρυ πεπαρμένου ὀθόνη τις ἐκκρεμὴς ἀπῃώρητο, βασιλικὸν ὕφασμα ποικιλίᾳ συνημμένων πολυτελῶν λίθων φωτὸς αὐγαῖς ἐξαστραπτόντων καλυπτόμενον σὺν πολλῷ τε καθυφασμένον χρυσῷ, ἀδιήγητόν τι χρῆμα τοῖς ὁρῶσι παρέχον τοῦ κάλλους. τοῦτο μὲν οὖν τὸ φᾶρος τοῦ κέρως ἐξημμένον σύμμετρον μήκους τε καὶ πλάτους περιγραφὴν ἀπελάμβανε· τὸ δ' ὄρθιον δόρυ, τῆς κάτω ἀρχῆς ἐπὶ πολὺ μηκυνόμενον ἄνω μετέωρον, ὑπὸ τῷ τοῦ σταυροῦ τροπαίῳ πρὸς αὐτοῖς ἄκροις τοῦ [διαγραφέντος] ὑφάσματος τὴν τοῦ θεοφιλοῦς βασιλέως εἰκόνα χρυσῆν μέχρι στέρνων τῶν τ' αὐτοῦ παίδων ὁμοίως ἔφερε. τούτῳ μὲν οὖν τῷ σωτηρίῳ σημείῳ πάσης ἀντικειμένης καὶ πολεμίας δυνάμεως ἀμυντηρίῳ διὰ παντὸς ἐχρῆτο βασιλεύς, τῶν τε στρατοπέδων ἁπάντων ἡγεῖσθαι τὰ τούτου ὁμοιώματα προσέταττεν.

Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα σμικρὸν ὕστερον. κατὰ δὲ τὸν δηλωθέντα χρόνον τὴν παράδοξον καταπλαγεὶς ὄψιν, οὐδ' ἕτερον θεὸν ἢ τὸν ὀφθέντα δοκιμάσας σέβειν, τοὺς τῶν αὐτοῦ λόγων μύστας ἀνεκαλεῖτο, καὶ τίς εἴη θεὸς [οὗτος] ἠρώτα τίς τε ὁ τῆς ὀφθείσης ὄψεως τοῦ σημείου λόγος. οἱ δὲ τὸν μὲν εἶναι θεὸν ἔφασαν θεοῦ τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ μόνου μονογενῆ παῖδα, τὸ δὲ σημεῖον τὸ φανὲν σύμβολον μὲν ἀθανασίας εἶναι, τρόπαιον δ' ὑπάρχειν τῆς κατὰ τοῦ θανάτου νίκης, ἣν ἐποιήσατό ποτε παρελθὼν ἐπὶ γῆς, ἐδίδασκόν τε τὰς τῆς παρόδου αἰτίας, τὸν ἀκριβῆ λόγον αὐτῷ τῆς κατ' ἀνθρώπους οἰκονομίας ὑποτιθέμενοι. ὁ δὲ καὶ τούτοις μὲν ἐμαθητεύετο τοῖς λόγοις, θαῦμα δ' εἶχε τῆς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτῷ παραδοθείσης θεοφανείας, συμβάλλων τε τὴν οὐράνιον ὄψιν τῇ τῶν λεγομένων ἑρμηνείᾳ τὴν διάνοιαν ἐστηρίζετο, θεοδίδακτον αὐτῷ τὴν τούτων γνῶσιν παρεῖναι πειθόμενος. καὶ αὐτὸς δ' ἤδη τοῖς ἐνθέοις ἀναγνώσμασι προσέχειν ἠξίου. καὶ δὴ τοὺς τοῦ θεοῦ ἱερέας παρέδρους αὐτῷ ποιησάμενος τὸν ὀφθέντα θεὸν πάσαις δεῖν ᾤετο θεραπείαις τιμᾶν. κἄπειτα φραξάμενος ταῖς εἰς αὐτὸν ἀγαθαῖς ἐλπίσιν ὡρμᾶτο λοιπὸν τοῦ τυραννικοῦ πυρὸς τὴν ἀπειλὴν κατασβέσων.

From the transverse bar, which was bisected by the pole, hung suspended a cloth, an imperial tapestry covered with a pattern of precious stones fastened together, which glittered with shafts of light, and interwoven with much gold, producing an impression of indescribable beauty on those who saw it. This banner then, attached to the bar was given equal dimensions of length and breadth. But the upright pole, which extended upwards a long way from its lower end, below the trophy of the cross and near the top of the tapestry delineated, carried the golden

[52] Since chapters 28-31 are critical for my analysis, I have opted to translate them myself. The rest of the translation (chapters 32-33) – less crucial for the form of the 'Constantinian' monogram – comes from Cameron and Hall (1999: 81-82). The Greek text for all parts is taken from Winkelmann (1975).

[53] The translation for the following paragraphs is from Cameron and Hall (1999) and the Greek text is taken from Winkelmann (1975).

> head-and-shoulders portrait of the Godbeloved Emperor, and likewise of his sons. This saving sign was always used by the Emperor for protection against every opposing and hostile force, and he commanded replicas of it to lead all of his armies.
>
> That was, however, somewhat later. At the time in question, stunned by the amazing vision, and determined to worship no other god than the one who had appeared, he summoned those expert in his words, and enquired who this god was, and what was the explanation of the vision which had appeared of the sign. They said that the god was the Only begotten Son of the one and only God, and that the sign which appeared was a token of immortality, and was an abiding trophy of the victory over death, which he had once won when he was present on earth. They began to teach him the reasons for his coming, explaining to him in detail the story of his self-accommodation to human conditions. He listened attentively to these accounts too, while he marvelled at the divine manifestation which had been granted to his eyes; comparing the heavenly vision with the meaning of what was being said, he made up his mind, convinced that it was as God's own teaching that the knowledge of these things had come to him. He now decided personally to apply himself to the divinely inspired writings. Taking the priests of God as his advisers, he also deemed it right the honour the God who had appeared to him with all due rites. Thereafter, fortified by good hopes in him, he finally set about extinguishing the menacing flames of tyranny.
>
> Eusebius, *Vit. Const.* 1. 31-32

As mentioned above, scholars have questioned the authenticity of this passage (refer to Ch.4, fn. 47). However, with the discovery in Egypt of a portion of the text from this passage dating to the time of Eusebius, it has now been established as a part of the original text. This passage has not garnered as much discussion as the version of Constantine's revelation in a dream found in Lactantius, as there is no ambiguity about the symbol that Eusebius is describing. He writes about the chi-rho, which, as he tells his readers, is a monogram composed of the first two letters of Christ's name, the Chi and the Rho.

In Eusebius' version of events, which he claims to have heard from Constantine himself,[54] the emperor and his troops first see a vision of a cross of light in the sky and then, later, while he is sleeping, Christ appears to him and shows him the symbol once more. After the

[54] As Barnes (2014: 76) points out, there is no reason to assume that this was done in a private consultation with the emperor.

dream, Constantine is advised on the meaning behind the symbol and sets out to create a likeness of the image, which becomes a talisman the emperor can use successfully against his enemies.

4.3 Optatian and his Patterned Poetry

A final author who ought to be mentioned in an examination surrounding Constantine, the chi-rho, and the fourth century is Publilius Optatianus Porphyrius, commonly referred to in English as Optatian. Although he never directly refers to the chi-rho in his writing – aside from mentioning unspecified, but suggestive, *signa* –, Optatian is nonetheless important for understanding the symbol and the context within which the emperor promoted it. Like Lactantius, Optatian was a member of the imperial household and would have had direct contact with the emperor. Because of this imperial relationship, his writing is a valuable addition to understanding the emperor's more private viewpoint. He authored some thirty-one surviving poems, twenty of which are panegyrics dedicated to Constantine, and exchanged letters with the emperor, two of which have survived.[55] Before discussing his poems in more detail, I will first detail what scholars have pieced together about the life of Optatian.

4.3.1 Optatian

Little is known about the life of Optatian before he entered Constantine's court. Indeed, only three facts can be gleaned about the poet from the ancient sources: [56] he was exiled by Constantine; he held the office of *praefectus urbi* in Rome twice; and he was the *proconsul* of

[55] There have been some questions about whether or not all of the thirty-one surviving poems should be attributed to Optatian. Dick (1987: 6) states that twenty-five poems are ascribed to Optatian, but later (page 26) says there are thirty-one, with some apocryphal ones. Squire (2017: 29) and Wienand (2017: 132) also state that there are thirty-one poems. For our purposes, it is important to note that of the poems, twenty were dedicated to Constantine (see Barnes (1975: 173).

[56] There is also an inscription fragment from Rome, which lists the names of several men, including Optatian (see Barnes 1975: 176). However, it does not provide us with any concrete facts about the poet's life.

Achaea. We know that Optatian was exiled, as his return to the court of Constantine was notable enough to have been remarked upon in the *Chronica* of Saint Jerome.[57] His exile was the impetus for the collection of panegyric poems that he sent to the emperor, the dating of which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Optatian likely held his offices after Constantine recalled him from exile. Wienand contends that he was the governor of Achaea sometime between 326 and 329 CE.[58] He then held the office of *praefectus urbi* twice – as told by the Chronographer of 354 – in 329 and 333 CE, although his position lasted only for a period of a month each time.[59] In light of this sparse evidence, we can conclude that Optatian was a significant enough senator in the emperor's court to be appointed to these positions after his return from exile. This turn in his fortune coincided with the book of poems he sent to Constantine, as indicated by Saint Jerome.[60] It is plausible that Constantine enjoyed the book of poems enough to repeal Optatian's exile and grant him some power upon his return. Thus, Optatian should be considered an important source for the study not only of Constantine but also, as we shall see below, of the chi-rho.

A final consideration about the life of Optatian within this milieu should be addressed before we examine his poems in more depth. According to Squire, "much ink has been spilt on the question whether Optatian should be labeled a 'pagan' or 'Christian' poet."[61] However,

---

[57] Jerome *Chron. 277th Olympiad*. The *Chronica* of Saint Jerome is a Latin translation of the chronicles of Eusebius, with an addition of the years 325 to 379 CE. See also Barnes (1975), 175; and Levitan (1985), 245. Levitan agrees with Barnes that Optatian was exiled sometime around 315 CE. However, Squire (2017b: 32) places Optatian's exile approximately between 322 and 326 CE. Wienand (2017: 127-132) concludes that the volume of poems Optatian sent to Constantine was presented in 326 CE; thus, he aligns with Squire's proposed timeline.
[58] *AE* 1931, 6. See also Wienand (2017), 139. In contrast, Barnes (1975: 177) and Levitan (1985: 245) conclude that Optatian was the governor of Greece before his exile. Barnes argues that holding the governorship of Acheae after the urban prefecture would have been unlikely.
[59] Mommsen (1892), 68. See also Barnes (1975), 174; and Pelttari (2014), 75.
[60] Refer back to Ch. 4, fn. 57. The Latin states *Porphyrius misso ad Constantinum insigni uolumine exilio liberatur.*
[61] Squire (2017a), 96. The debate mainly revolves around the authenticity of *Poem XXIV*, which has the most unambiguously Christian meaning.

Green has cautioned against this rigid dichotomy.[62] He challenges the assumption that one was strictly either a 'pagan' or a Christian during this time of religious transformation and fluidity. Perhaps, then, it is more beneficial to say that, whatever his personal religious beliefs, Optatian knew how to exploit significant *signa* – both in terms of symbols and, more broadly, words –to ingratiate himself back into the emperor's favour.

4.3.2 The Poems

As mentioned above, Optatian, after he had been exiled, compiled a book of panegyric poems to send to Constantine. Scholars have questioned the date the poems were penned. Barnes dates all of the poems to the autumn of 324 CE.[63] Wienand, on the other hand, suggests that of the thirty-one extant poems attributed to Optatian, eight were created during the period he was in exile.[64] These eight poems were compiled and sent to Constantine in 326 CE, right before he was released from his exile.

The quote at the beginning of this chapter is from Levitan's article, "Dancing at the End of a Rope: Optatian Porfyry and the Field of Roman Verse*"* (1985), and it neatly encapsulates the complexity of Optatian's poetry and earlier scholars' condescension to it. As we shall see when we examine a couple of the poems in more detail, his verse is not the most complex. In fact, it has been questioned if his poetry should even be considered as such and, if it can be, it has been criticized as "lacking in all interest."[65] But the merit of Optatian's poems lies not only within the verse itself. His poems are examples of a poetic technique called *technopaegnion*,

[62] Green (2010b), 67.
[63] See Barnes (1975), 184. Throughout the article, Barnes details each panegyric's significance and potential dating. He concludes that all could have been written in 324 CE, after Constantine's defeat of Licinius. Squire (2017a: 58) argues that the poems were written between the 310s and 320s.
[64] Wienand (2017), 132-133. Wienand states that *Poems VIII, X, XVI, XXI,* and *XXIII* likely date before Optatian's exile; *Poems XVII, XXII, XXIV*, and *XXXI* have uncertain authenticity; *Poem XVIII* likely dates to after Optatian's exile; *Poems XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVIII, XXIX*, and *XXX* are not addressed to Constantine; and *Poems XI, XII, XIII,* and *XVI* are not intricate enough to present as a gift.
[65] Barton (1975), 453.

where certain words and phrases form visual images contained within the rest of the verse.[66] The visual images are made by connecting particular letters in the poem together (called the *versus intexti*), forming poems within the poems. These patterned poems – or *versus intexti* ('interwoven verses') as Optatian refers to them[67] – are complex works of literature and art. The poetry needs to make sense not only as the whole poem is read from right to left but also when the individual phrases, which form the image and can be read in any direction, are deconstructed from the rest of the poem. Optatian's poetry is even more intricate, as he reuses letters from both Latin and Greek sentences.[68] Nevertheless, despite the complexities surrounding the creation of his panegyrics to Constantine, his poetry has garnered, until recently, little admiration.[69] Some scholars, particularly Squire and Wienand, have attempted to examine Optatian under a new lens in the last few years.

In their edited monograph on the work of Optatian, *Morphogrammata / The Lettered Art of Optatian: Figuring Cultural Transformations in the Age of Constantine* (2017), Squire and Wienand present a new typographical layout of the poems.[70] According to the editors, this was not easy, as they had to decide how to present the *versus intexti* as accurately as possible. Medieval manuscripts, however, might provide us with some indication as to how the poems were originally presented (see Figure 4.1).[71] Optatian, in the preface to his poems, also indicates

[66] Levitan (1985), 246. Optatian refers to his poetry as "signs" (see Squire 2017a: 87).
[67] See Squire (2017b), 25, fn. 8.
[68] Levitan (1985), 258; and Squire (2017a), 88. Greek messages are hidden in three of his poems: *XVI, XIX*, and *XXIII*. See more on *Poem XIX* below. Some medieval manuscripts offer commentaries on how to decode the hidden messages (see Squire 2017a: 76).
[69] For a complete analysis of the criticism on Optatian and his poetry, see Squire (2017a), 55-56; and Squire (2017b), 26. Browning (1983: 14), in *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, calls the poems "trifles" and questions the taste of the imperial court. See also Higgins (1987: 26), who states that some scholars miss the point of the poems.
[70] Squire & Wienand (2017), 24-26.
[71] Green (2010b: 66). However, Squire (2017a: 76) states that extant manuscripts do not indicate how they would have been presented in the fourth century. Polara (1973) examined twenty surviving manuscripts, dating from the eighth to the seventeenth centuries, to compile his compendium of the poems. Polara's text is the standard version scholars reproduce for their analyses of the poems. For example, Squire and Wienand's *Morphogrammata / The*

that he has produced his work "all glittering purple, written with twinkling letters in gold and silver" (*ostro tota nitens, argento auroque coruscis scripta notis*).[72] Therefore, the hidden messages in the poetry would not have had to be 'found' as such (as though doing a word-search) but would have had to be decoded, especially if Latin letters were being used for both Latin and Greek words.

Optatian's poetry can be viewed as a mixture of art and literature, which is why his work is essential in the context of late antiquity and the reign of Constantine. Additionally, and particularly relevant to this dissertation, four of his poems (*VIII, XIV, XIX*, and *XXIV*) feature the chi-rho. Despite this, the chi-rho as a patterned-picture in Optatian's poetry has been relatively neglected in Constantinian scholarship,[73] even though examining the poems can tell us more about the environment in which the symbol was used. Squire has recently argued that Optatian's poems reflect the milieu of the early fourth century, which was a period of cultural and religious negotiation, and they offer a unique perspective into the landscape of late antiquity.[74] They also present us with pictorial examples of early Christian art. Optatian should not be overlooked as a crucial source for investigating the culture within which the chi-rho was redeveloped in the court of Constantine, especially since culture is a key component for interpreting the meaning behind a symbol, as detailed in Chapter 2. Of the three poems firmly attributed to Optatian that contain a chi-rho,[75] I will examine two, *Poems VIII* and *XIX*, in the most detail since they have the more intricate visual patterns. I will now turn to a discussion of the first of these three poems.

Lettered Art of Optatian: Figuring Cultural Transformations in the Age of Constantine (2017) present a new layout of the poems, based on Polara's work.

[72] Optatian, *Poem I*. 3-4.

[73] For a complete analysis, see Squire (2017a), 57, ft. 9. Two notable exceptions are Garipzanov (2018: 59-61) and Squire & Whitton (2017).

[74] Squire (2017a), 57; and Squire (2017b), 80. See also Habinek (2017), 421. According to Squire (2017: 77b), Optatian was writing when Christian art was starting to become important.

[75] I will not discuss *Poem XXIV* as its attribution to Optatian has been questioned. See Squire (2017b: 71, fn. 106). Like *Poem XIV*, *Poem XXIV* also features a large chi-rho. Departing from the panegyrical text of *Poem VIII*, *Poem*

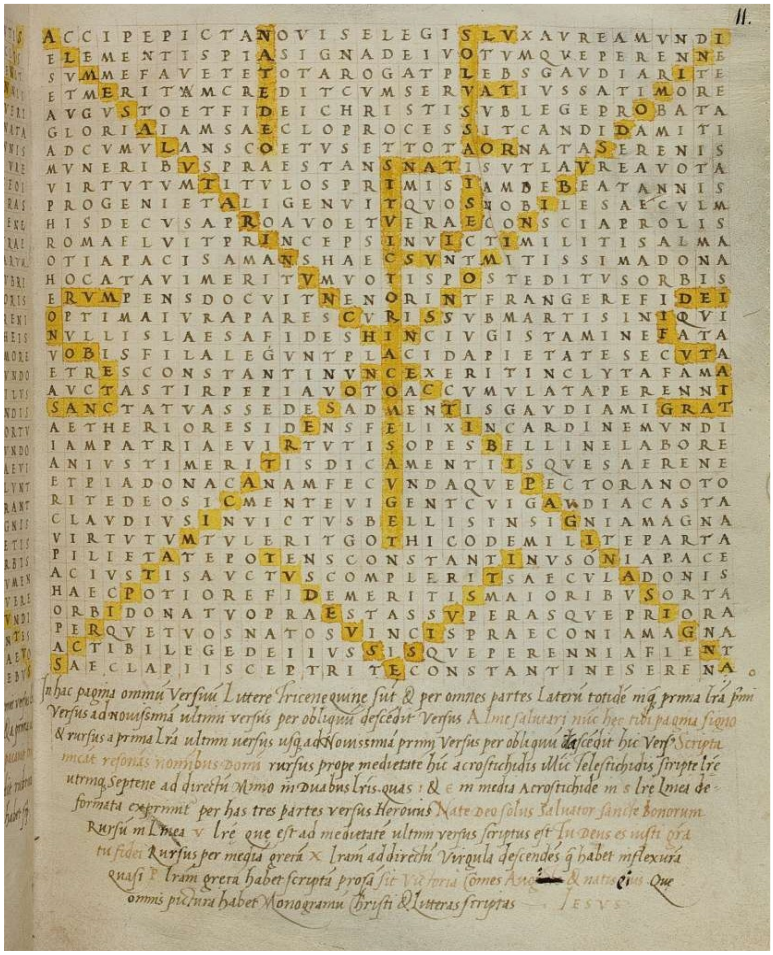

Figure 4.1 Folio 4f from a sixteenth-century manuscript featuring Optatian's *Poem VIII* (Codex Augustaneus 9 Guelferbytanus). A chi-rho is surrounded by the letter I-E-S-V-S. 1st quarter of 4th century CE. © Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel < http://diglib.hab.de/mss/9-aug-4f/start.htm?image=00029>

XXIV is replete with Christian themes (Squire 2017b: 66-67). The poem is addressed to Christ and does not mention Constantine at all. The *versus intextus* found in the chi-rho is also addressed to Christ: *omnipotens genitor tuque o diuisio mixta, filius atque pater et sanctus spiritus unum, faueas uotis* (all-powerful Father, and you, o division mingled as one, Son and Father and Holy Spirit, may you favour our prayers). It is thought to be a medieval imitation of the style of Optatian, like *Poem XXII* (see Squire & Whitton 2017: 90). Both Green (2010b: 67) and Squire (2017b: 71, fn. 107) argue that it is an authentic poem. Since the poem references the Holy Trinity, which would have only been negotiated in the summer of 325 CE at the council of Nicaea, I, too, question its authenticity. While it is possible that Optatian wrote the poem after he had heard the decree of the consubstantiation of the Trinity, the fact that *Poems XXIV* and *XXII* – which is also believed to be apocryphal – are the only two not to have textual *scholia* for decoding the *versus intexti* on surviving manuscripts supplements the argument of inauthenticity (Squire & Whitton (2017: 90). Squire and Whitton concede that the poem might not belong to Optatian but say it could still date to the fourth century. Additionally, Squire notes that the top corners of the poem have an 'o', while the bottom ones have an 'a', which he believes is a reference to the alpha and omega (Squire 2017b: 65-66). He also mentions that *Poem VIII* has an 'a' beginning a sentence and an 'o' ending it, potentially also referring to the alpha and omega, but this is less certain. As we shall see in Chapters 6 and 7, however, the alpha and omega are not found in conjunction with the chi-rho until later in the fourth century, another possible indication that the poem is from a later period. Since its attribution, and therefore its date, is in question and it differs significantly from the three other poems that feature the chi-rho, *Poem XXIV* cannot be used to support any theories surrounding the use of the chi-rho in the fourth century.

4.3.2.a Poem VIII

According to Lunn-Rockliffe and Wienand, *Poem VIII* dates either to 317 or 321 CE, which would have been before Optatian's exile.[76] Despite its early date, the picture formed by the *versus intextus* of Optatian's eighth poem is the most overtly Christian. The manuscript features a chi-rho surrounded by letters that spell 'IESUS' and, therefore, there is no ambiguity to the function of the chi-rho: it is a reference to the 'Christ' of 'Jesus Christ' (see **Figure 4.1**). Nevertheless, the poem is addressed to Constantine – who is called the "golden light of the world" (*lux aurea mundi*) – and, although Christ is directly mentioned within the text, so too are Mars and the Fates. The poem, in its entirety, reads:[77]

> *Accipe picta novis elegis, lux aurea mundi,*
> *clementis pia signa dei votumque perenne!*
> *summe, fave! te tota rogat plebs gaudia rite,*
> *et meritam credit, cum servat iussa timore*
> *Augusto et fidei, Christi sub lege probata.*
> *gloria iam saeclo processit candida miti,*
> *adcumulans coetus et tota ornata serenis*
> *muneribus praestans natis, ut laurea vota,*
> *virtutum titulos, primis iam debeat annis,*
> *progenie tali genuit quos nobile saeclum.*
> *his decus a proavo; et verae conscia prolis*
> *Roma cluit, princeps invicti militis, alma,*
> *otia pacis amans. haec sunt mitissima dona,*
> *hoc atavi meritum. votis post editus orbis*
> *erumpens docuit ne norint frangere fidei*
> *optima iura pares; curis sub Martis iniqui*
> *nullis laesa fides. hinc iugi stamina fata*
> *vobis fila legunt placida pietate secuta,*
> *et res Constanti nunc exerit inclita Fama,*
> *aucta stirpe pia, voto accumulata perenni;*

[76] These dates are based on the mention of Crispus' success in Gaul, see Lunn-Rockliffe (2017), 441; and Wienand (2017), 151. Wienand (2017: 127) concludes that Optatian would have been exiled in 322 CE. Refer back to Ch. 4, fn. 64. Both Constantius Chlorus (Constantine's father) and Claudius Gothicus are mentioned in the poem. A panegyric delivered in Trier in 310 CE mentions an ancestral relationship between Constantine and Claudius Gothicus, alleging Gothicus was Constantius Chlorus' grandfather (see Bardill 2012: 82).

[77] Currently, there are no English translations of Optatian's poems. The Latin is especially complicated because Optatian has made many stylistic decisions to make his acrostics fit in the poem. I have opted to translate both *Poems VIII* and *XIX* (below), and I have done my best to represent the extant Latin. All mistakes in the translations are my own.

sancta suas sedes ad mentis gaudia migrat
aetherio residens felix in cardine mundi.
iam patriae virtutis opus belline labore
an iusti meritis dicam mentisque serenae?
et pia dona canam fecundaque pectora noto
rite deo, sic mente vigent cui gaudia casta?
Claudius invictus bellis insignia magna
virtutum tulerit Gothico de milite parta,
et pietate potens Constantius omnia pace
ac iustis auctus complerit saecula donis:
haec potiore fide, meritis maioribus orta
orbi dona tuo praestas, superasque priora,
perque tuos natos vincis praeconia magna.
ac tibi lege dei iussisque perennia fient
saecla pii sceptri te, Constantine, sereno.

Receive, golden light of the world, the pious signs and everlasting vow of the merciful God, painted in new elegiac verses! Greatest, be favourable! According to custom, all the people ask you for joy and trust that they are worthy of it, since after they have been tested under the law of Christ, he guards through fear the laws of Augustus and the faith. Already radiant glory has advanced in this gentle age, accumulating political unions and supplying to the children everything adorned with serene tributes, in order that the vowed triumph of your military talents –now, in the first years – can owe distinctions, to which the remarkable age of such a race has given birth. For these deeds, honour from your ancestor; and nourishing Rome, leader of the unconquered army, because she loves the leisures of peace, purifies. These are very mild gifts; this is the merit of the ancestor. He, after he had been elevated and busting with vows, taught the world in order that his equals would not have known to break the great laws of faith; with no worries of an enemy under Mars, faith had been injured. From here, the Fates read the strings for you, the threads that follow with continual gentle loyalty; and now illustrious Fame stretches forth the deeds of (the house of) Constantius: increased by their pious lineage, enhanced with their perpetual vow. Sacred, it (Fame) moves its seats to the joys of the mind; it is auspicious, residing in the heavenly area of the world. Now, will I state the powers of the fatherland, the need, in hardship, of war or just merit and a serene mind? And will I sing about the pious gifts and the hearts, fruitful with God solemnly having been known, for which joys flourish in this manner in his chaste mind? Claudius, unconquered in wars, brought great emblems of his virtues, which had been acquired from the Gothic army, and great Constantius, powerful with responsibility, has filled all the ages with peace and just gifts; you offer these gifts, which have emerged from a better faith, with greater merits for your world, and you surpass the earlier times, and through your children you gain great commendations. And for you the continual ages of your rule will come about with the law and commands of God, since you, Constantine, are fair.

Opt. *Carm. VIII*

Several members of Constantine's family are directly named, and Constantine is praised for the enterprises of his dynasty.

As mentioned at the poem's beginning, Constantine's success is because of God's favour. God gave Constantine the "pious signs" (*pia signa)* that Optatian now paints with his new verses. As we have seen in the preceding analysis of Eusebius, the chi-rho is the sign granted by God to Constantine, which gives him superiority over his enemies. Indeed, Habinek remarks that if we view the whole poem as an artifact, it appears as a sort of *labarum,* like those found on imperial coins (a square shape with a chi-rho in the centre).[78] Squire professes that, despite the visual significance of the graphic of 'Jesus Christ' written on the page, the monogram is void of any Christian meaning.[79] He concludes that this visual sign functions as a way of praising Constantine. I would argue that using the sign to praise Constantine does not necessarily eradicate the underlying Christian symbolism, especially in combination with the 'IESUS.' Furthermore, Christ is mentioned again directly within the poem's text, referred to as the judge of the Roman people.

On the other hand, the text also refers to Mars as a protector against enemies, and the Fates, who dole out the threads of destiny. Squire comments that in certain contexts, like these poems, the myths of the traditional Roman gods and heroes could be imbued with new Christian meaning.[80] But as I mentioned above, Optatian's poetry contains a fusion of Christian and non-Christian themes, as the fourth century – especially the early fourth century – was a time of religious negotiation. Furthermore, and most importantly here, Mars and the Fates were common metaphors used without real religious significance and thus their inclusion here poses no

[78] Habinek (2017), 392. For more on the *labarum* on the coins of Constantine, see Chapter 5.
[79] Squire (2017b), 70.
[80] Squire (2017b), 80. See also *Poem XIX*, which references Apollo three times.

problems and they do not need to be interpreted as 'pagan' elements in an otherwise Christian poem.

The *versus intextus* also implies Christian reverence.

> *alme, salutari nunc haec tibi pagina signo*
> *scripta micat resonans nominibus domini.*
> *nate deo, solus salvator sancte honorum,*
> *tu deus es iusti, gratia tu fidei.*
> *sit victoria comes Aug. et natis eius.*
>
> Kind one, this page now glitters for you, written with the saving sign, resonating with the names of the Lord. Son of God (lit. born from God), the only divine saviour of honorable men, you are the God of justice; you are the grace of faith. May victory be the companion of Augustus and his children!
>
> Opt. *Carm. VIII (versus intextus)*

The page is glittering with the names of the Lord, Jesus and Christ, who is the saviour of men. Squire and Whitton note the ambiguity of who is being addressed as '*alme,'* Christ or Constantine.[81] Notwithstanding this ambiguity, the reader connects the saving sign with the imperial family. The apotropaic nature of the symbol is highlighted in this early fourth-century context.

4.3.2.b Poem XIV

Poem XIV, which has a patterned picture of a chi-rho, tells of Constantine's defeat of Licinius in 324 CE.[82] The words that form the chi-rho succinctly summarize the central theme of the poem:

> *summi dei auxilio nutuque perpetuo tutus*
> *orbem totum pacavit trucidatis tyrannis*
> *Constantinus pius et aeternus imperator,*
> *reparator orbis*

[81] Squire & Whitton (2017), 80. Squire and Whitton also question whether the 'names of the Lord' refer to Constantine.
[82] Optatian, *Poem XIV*.4.

> Protected by the help and perpetual will of the highest God, Constantine, pious and eternal emperor, restorer of the world, subdued the whole world, after the tyrants had been massacred.
>
> Opt. *Carm. XIV (versus intextus)*[83]

I propose that the key word in the *versus intextus* is "protected" (*tutus*), which provides us with the key to decoding Optatian's mindset and the relevance of the chi-rho in the poem. It is only with the protection of the highest God that Constantine can maintain the peace of the empire. So while the poem is about the greatness of Constantine, it is God (and the chi-rho) who safeguards the imperial family so that they can provide security to the Roman people. Although less general in its emphasis, this theme is similar to the one we encountered in *Poem VIII*. The apotropaic nature of the chi-rho will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

4.3.2.c Poem XIX

Poem XIX is the most intricate of Optatian's poems. As with *Poem VIII*, the manuscript presentation of *Poem XIX* features a patterned image with more than just the chi-rho (see **Figure 4.2**). The *versus intexti* form a trireme with a chi-rho in place of the sail.[84] The letters 'VOT' appear behind the trireme, and the Roman numeral 'XX' can be found in the ship's hull. According to Squire, the image celebrates Constantine's *vicennalia* (the twentieth anniversary of his rule) and thus can be dated to the years 325 and 326 CE.[85] Once again, and perhaps unsurprisingly given the related imagery on the poem, it is Constantine who Optatian addresses.

[83] The Latin text of the *versus intextus* can be found in Kluge (1926).
[84] According to Lunn-Rockliffe (2017: 452) the ship might reference Constantine's naval victory over Licinius.
[85] Squire (2017b), 73. See also Lunn-Rockliffe (2017), 430 & 445.

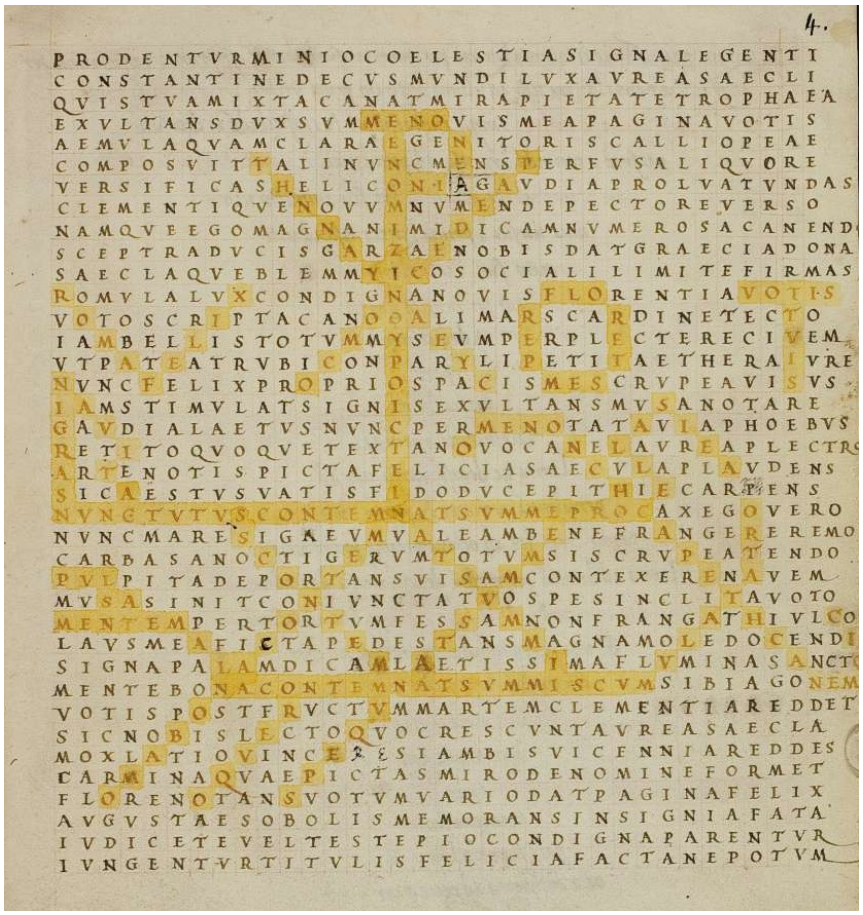

Figure 4.2 Folio 4r from a sixteenth-century manuscript featuring Optatian's *Poem XIX* (Codex Augustaneus 9 Guelferbytanus). A chi-rho appears in place of a trireme's sail. 1st quarter of 4th century.
© Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel <http://diglib.hab.de/mss/9-aug-4f/start.htm?image=00015>

The poem, in its entirety, is as follows:

Prodentur minio caelestia signa legenti.
Constantine, decus mundi, lux aurea saecli,
quis tua mixta canat mira pietate tropaea
exultans, dux summe, novis mea pagina votis,
aemula quam Clarii genitoris Calliopeae
composuit tali nunc mens perfusa liquore?
versificas Helicon in gaudia proluat undas,
clementique novum numen de pectore verset,
namque ego magnanimi dicam numerosa canendo
sceptra ducis. Gazzae nobis dat Graecia dona,
saeclaque Blemmyico sociali limite firmas,
Romula lux. condigna novis florentia votis
voto scripta cano. [t]ali Mars cardine tecto
iam bellis totum Myseum perplectere civem

ut pateat Rubicon parili petit aethera iure.
nunc felix proprios pacis me scrupea visus
iam stimulat signis exultans Musa notare,
guadia laetus nunc per me notat avia Phoebus.
retito quoque texta novo cane laurea plectro,
arte notis picta felicia saecula plaudens.
sic aestus vates fido duce, Pythie, carpens
nunc tutus contemnat, summe, procax; ego vero
nunc mare Sigaeum valeam bene frangere remo,
carbasa Noctiferum totum si scrupea tendo,
pulpita deportans. visam contexere navem
Musa sinit; coniuncta tuo spes inclita voto.
mentem per tortum fessam non frangat hiulco
laus mea ficta pede stans magna mole docendi.
signa palam dicam laetissima flumine sancto,
mente bona; contemnat, summis cum sibi agonem
votis post fractum Martem clementia reddet?
sic nobis lecto quo crescunt aurea saecla
mox Latio vincens iam bis vicennia reddes,
carmine quae pietas miro de nomine formet.
flore notans votum vario dat pagina felix,
Augustae sobolis memorans insignia fata.
iudice te vel teste pio condigna parentis
iungentur titulis felicia facta nepotum.

The celestial signs will be revealed to the reader in cinnabar (red). Constantine, glory of the world, golden light of the age, by what new vows could my page – exulting your victories mixed with your wonderful piety – sing, highest leader? Emulating that (page) which (the soul) of Clarius Apollo, father of Calliope, composed, my mind (composes) this (page), as it has now been imbued with such liquid. May the Helicon (Apollo) purify the waves written in verse for our delights, and may he stir a new divine will from his merciful heart! For I will describe, by singing about his numerous deeds, the rule of the brave leader. Greece gives us the gifts of Gaza and you, Roman light, strengthen our age with the allied border of Blemmyes. I sing the worthy, prosperous facts, for the new vows which had been written with a pledge. With so great an area guarded, Mars now seeks to punish the whole Mysian city with wars, in order that the Rubicon, with equal right the sky, may be accessible. Now my happy, severe Muse, because she is exulting, urges me already to write his own visions of peace with signs; now joyful Phoebus (Apollo) notes through me unfrequented joys. Sing also with a new, netted plectrum about the woven laurels, applauding the age embroidered with a letter in a lucky art. So may your bold poet, because he enjoys (them), Pythian (Apollo), be safe from passions, now protected, highest (god), by your loyal leader. Now I might have the very strength to break the Sigean Sea with the true oar, if I – bringing the wooden boards – stretch the rough sails the whole time the evening star (shines). The Muse allows (me) to weave the ship that had been seen; the illustrious hope connected to your vow. May my praise, created in verse, standing

> with a great heap of teaching, not break my mind, tired by twisting, with a hiatus. I will openly declare, with a good heart, the very happy signs in a sacred stream; would clemency look down on them, when – after the battle (ie. Mars) has been broken – it will yield the contest to him, because his vows are the greatest? So you, having been chosen by us, you – from whom the 20 year golden age will bring forth poems, which my piety forms about your extraordinary name – will now give back doubly, conquering soon in Latium. My lucky page, recording with a different ornament, gives his vow, remembering the notable destinies of the lineage of Augustus. The happy deeds of your descendants, very worthy of you, judge or pious witness, will be joined with the titles of their parent.
>
> Opt. *Carm. XIX*

As in *Poem VIII*, Constantine is referred to as the "golden light of the age" (*lux aurea saecli*), and, once more, Optatian draws attention to the "celestial signs" (*celaestia signa*) on the page, written this time in cinnabar red (*minium*). According to Lunn-Rockliffe, this colour of red was used in the celebrations surrounding victorious generals, in the inscriptions of funerary monuments, and for writing spells in magical texts.[86] Optatian, therefore, chose an appropriate colour for a poem about the emperor's excellence and the renewal of his vows to the Roman population. It also aptly reflects the apotropaic properties of the chi-rho.

The renewal of Constantine's vows is a recurring theme throughout the poem, reflecting the 'VOT XX' imagery projecting from the page. Also present are metaphors involving sailing, particularly observable in the *versus intexti,* which are made up of several Latin verses that can be read in various directions.[87]

> *Navita nunc tutus contemnat, summe, procellas.*
> *Nigras nunc tutus contemnat, summe, procellas.*
> *tutus contemnat summis cumulata tropaeis.*
> *pulsa mente mala contemnat, summe, procellas.*
> *spe quoque Roma bona contemnat, summe, procellas.*
> *Roma felix floret semper votis tuis.*
>
> Highest one, may the sailor, now safe, disregard the storms.
> Highest one, may he, now safe, disregard the dark storms.

[86] Lunn-Rockliffe (2017), 446-447.
[87] Squire & Whitton (2017), 80.

> May he, safe, disregard the things that have been overwhelmed by the greatest sea winds.
> Highest one, after his bad reason has been driven away, may he disregard the storms.
> Highest one, may Rome, too, with healthy hope, disregard the storms.
> Lucky Rome always flourishes with your vows.
>
> Opt. *Carm. XIX (versus intexti)*

In addition to these Latin sentences – and making decoding the messages hidden in the image of the ship even more complicated – is the presence of a Greek couplet, formed with Latin letters, found in the chi-rho, tiller, and rudder of the ship.[88]

> *τὴν ναῦν δεῖ κόσμον, σὲ δὲ ἄρμενον εἰνὶ νομίζιν*
> *θοὔροις τεινομενον σῆς ἀρετῆς ἀνέμοις.*
>
> One ought to think that the ship is the world and that you are the rigging, stretched with the furious winds of your virtue.
>
> Opt. *Carm. XIX (versus intextus)*

Since the subject of the "highest one" (*summe*) in the Latin verses is Constantine, who allows Rome to flourish with his vows, the emperor might also be the subject of the Greek couplet, the rigging that holds up the ship's sails, which plays upon the idea of the ship of the state being navigated by the ruler, a metaphor found in the work of other Roman poets.[89] According to Squire, the ship can also serve as a symbol of Christ and Christianity.[90] Indeed, in Chapter 3, we have already seen Justin the Martyr's quote on the connection of the cross and the mast of a ship. I propose, however, that Constantine (the rigging) is holding up the mast (the chi-rho). In other words, the sign would not exist without the emperor. Constantine promotes Christ and, in turn, is supported by the saving sign that protects Rome (the ship) from her enemies (the furious winds).

[88] Squire (2017a), 88-89; and Squire & Whittton (2017), 80. The couplet begins at the top left of the chi-rho. A few examples of the use of Latin letters for Greek are: C for Σ and A for Δ. According to Squire (2017a: 89), Optatian's poems not only switch between visual and verbal modes but also use different verbal systems.
[89] Lunn-Rockliffe (2017), 449-450.
[90] Squire (2017b), 74, fn. 115.

4.4 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

I am convinced that we have two conflicting reports about the form of the saving sign of Christ. The two conflicting narratives – as found in Lactantius and Eusebius – are believable for different reasons. In the case of Lactantius, it is more likely that he heard the story from the emperor directly, as an official employed in the imperial court. If he did not hear it from the emperor, he likely got the story second-hand from someone close to the emperor.[91] As discussed above, while Eusebius, too, may have heard of the events from the emperor, it would have been years after Lactantius had already written *De Mortibus Persecutorum*.

On the other hand, Eusebius' description of the event is more detailed than Lactantius'. For Eusebius, the meaning behind the chi-rho is only realized after two religious experiences (the vision and the dream) and consultation with priests. For Lactantius, the tau-rho is put on the shields of Constantine's soldiers after a single event, a dream. However, if *commonitus est* – as found in the manuscript of Lactantius – is translated as 'reminded' instead of 'advised,' as it typically is by translators,[92] the two versions are brought more in line with each other. Using this reading, Lactantius has glossed over the vision to describe instead the dream where the mystic symbol is revealed in full and explained to Constantine. In further support of Eusebius' version, the chi-rho was more prominent as a symbol on coinage in the fourth century, albeit – as we will see in the next chapter – usually as an issue mark. Therefore, both versions could be argued as the 'correct' version, but is this necessary?

After studying the passages found in both Lactantius and Eusebius, as they have come down to us, I would argue that they describe two different symbols, and they should be

[91] Creed (1984), xlv.
[92] See Barnes (2014), 79; and Creed (1984), 63.

interpreted as such. Aside from some scholars wanting to see a concordance between the descriptions found in the two manuscripts, there is no reason to make the two passages agree.

Despite the conclusion that Lactantius and Eusebius were describing two different symbols, there is no reason to assume that one of them was mistaken as to the symbol Constantine saw or that the two versions cannot co-exist. As seen above, scholars have tried to reconcile the visions found in the *Panegyric of 310*, *De Mortibus Persecutorum,* and the *Vita Constantini*. As Barnes proposes, the original vision, occurring before the events of 312 CE and described in the *Panegyric of 310*, was attributed to Apollo and later changed to the Christian God when Constantine converted to Christianity.[93] If this is a possibility, the same could have been done between the writing of *De Mortibus Persecutorum* and the *Vita Constantini*. Constantine may have decided that using the chi-rho as a 'saving sign' worked better than using a tau-rho – especially considering the original mystical properties passed on to the new, Constantinian version of the chi-rho, as mentioned in Chapter 3 – and altered the story accordingly.

Very different than the narratives of Lactantius and Eusebius, Optatian's poems, as they appear in the manuscript tradition, have been compared to textiles and mosaics, allowing viewers to interpret the imagery from multiple perspectives.[94] I imagine that individual letters with distinct colours projecting from the page would have had the artistic modality of a portable mosaic. Having seen the images in the poem, the viewer/reader could then turn their attention to read the poetry 'underneath.' The semiotic understanding of Optatian's works would have required switching between different modes of interpreting the various symbols. It is important to stress that the viewer would have first encountered the image, which would then have

[93] Barnes (2014), 76.
[94] Habinek (2017), 417.

informed how they interpreted the words in the poem. The words, in turn, could have then influenced their reassessment of the imagery.

Beyond the artistic and semiotic complexities of his poems, Optatian gives a unique insight into the function of the chi-rho at the midway point between the symbol's adoption in 312 CE and Constantine's death in 337 CE. In examining Optatian's panegyrics to Constantine as a whole, Habinek concludes that although the poems allow for different interpretations, what they have in common is the honour they bestow upon the emperor.[95] Regarding those poems featuring a chi-rho (with the exception of *Poem XXIV*), I would agree that highlighting the emperor's superiority is of paramount importance to Optatian, who wished to stress the emperor's greatness in order to be granted a pardon from exile. Additionally, however, the emperor's greatness, and power, have been bestowed upon him from God, and the symbol of His favour is the chi-rho. In *Poem VIII*'s *versus intextus*, the chi-rho is called the saving sign, referring to the Battle of the Milvian Bridge and anticipating the words that Eusebius would use.[96] The 'saving sign' not only refers to salvation under Christ but – and possibly more importantly for the context in which it was created – it also refers to Constantine's ability to conquer his enemies. The chi-rho and Constantine are intrinsically linked to each other: Constantine is emperor because of the apotropaic nature of the chi-rho, and the chi-rho is a prominent symbol because of its connection to the emperor.

It is plausible that Constantine chose the altered military standard, the *labarum* (discussed in Chapter 1), as his 'saving sign', not because of a vision but as a calculated decision. Like many of the policies implemented by Constantine during his reign, the symbol's multivalence

[95] Habinek (2017), 420. Squire (2017b, 97) likens Optatian's poetry to the Arch of Constantine, which comprises various parts to create a united whole that presents the viewer with different means of interpretation.
[96] Although it is only speculation, Eusebius may have encountered Optatian's poetry.

could have appealed to different people for different reasons.[97] Playing on the ambiguity of the symbol would have worked in his favour. In the third century, the tau-rho was already being used as a Christian symbol (see Chapter 3).[98] For Lactantius, it would have been unambiguously religious (and Christian). The chi-rho, however, was a novelty, unconnected to the Christian religion, and the Roman army and elite might have viewed it more as a dynastic symbol than a religious one.[99] Optatian's poems help to illustrate this point. While he firmly places the chi-rho within a Christian milieu, the symbol is also explicitly linked to the Constantinian family.

A compelling piece of support for the chi-rho as a dynastic symbol – albeit complementary with its Christian symbolism – can be found in the Eusebian passage found above. As Eusebius describes it, *the labarum* is composed not only of chi-rho – as the 'saving sign of Christ' – but the talisman is also merged with a gold portrait of the emperor and his sons. This portrait would have visually linked the emperor and his dynasty to the new symbol, as we also encounter in Optatian's panegyrics. Christianity is the religion that saved the empire, but Constantine – and the Constantian dynasty – are the vessels that assured its success.

To conclude, there is no reason to suppose that a mistake was made in the transcription of either Lactantius or Eusebius' account. In fact, the evidence suggests otherwise. It should also be stressed that the two accounts do not have to be identical for both to be valid and contain relevant information. Lactantius, writing shortly after the vision, was detailing events that happened to a newly converted Christian emperor. Writing two decades later, Eusebius was describing an event that could be used for propagandistic ends. Optatian, linking the two accounts, uses the symbol to flatter the emperor and appeal for his return from exile. By the time Optatian and Eusebius

[97] Drake (2000), 204. The *edict of Milan* can also be viewed in this light. It is not only a document of religious toleration but also a calculated policy that would have appealed to different groups.
[98] Rougé (1976), 21. It acted as a visual representation of Jesus on the cross (see Hurtado (2006: 151).
[99] Drake (2000), 203.

were writing, the chi-rho was already in distribution on coins. It was no longer an obscure symbol – as it would have been during the time of Lactantius – but a sign connected to the imperial family.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE NUMISMATIC ACCOUNT: THE USE OF THE CHI-RHO AND TAU-RHO ON FOURTH-CENTURY COINS

> *The great strength of the divinely inspired faith fixed in his soul might be deduced by considering also the fact that he had his own portrait so depicted on the gold coinage that he appeared to look upwards in the manner of one reaching out to God in prayer.*
>
> Eusebius, *VC*, 4.15.1

****

This chapter examines the use of the chi-rho and the tau-rho on imperial coins minted between the years 312 and 408 CE. In order to adequately study the available evidence, the *Roman Imperial Coinage* (henceforth abbreviated *RIC*) – the standard catalogue for numismatic studies of the Roman Empire – was consulted and will be referenced throughout. The information in the *RIC* was supplemented by material from the *Online Coins of the Roman Empire* (*OCRE*) database.[1] I have divided the numismatic evidence into four main sections: the coins of Constantine I; the coins of Constantine's sons; the coins of Julian the apostate; and the coins of the Valentinians and Theodosians. This chapter aims to outline the coins issued in the fourth century and provide some primary conclusions on the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho within this medium. Before beginning my investigation of fourth-century coins, I will first discuss the audience, authority, and arrangement of Roman imperial coins, all relevant topics for contextualizing the discussion in the rest of this chapter.

[1] *OCRE* was used primarily to find and compare images of the coins and examine the symbols found thereupon. Since *OCRE* labels both chi-rhos and tau-rhos as the same symbol, the *RIC* was a better source for initially compiling my database and then verifying the images using *OCRE.*

5.1 AUDIENCE, AUTHORITY, AND ARRANGEMENT OF ROMAN IMPERIAL COINAGE

There are several considerations to take into account when determining the audience for a particular coin type,[2] including its worth, its level of circulation, and where it was produced.[3] With Diocletian's monetary reforms towards the end of the 3rd century, the weight, metallic purity, and denomination of coins became standardized once more.[4] This standardization is relevant, as the type of metal –and, therefore, denomination – used to make the coin would have determined, to some extent, which social classes would have had access to them. The targeted audience, in turn, may have impacted the design of the coin's iconography, as any intended message could have been altered to suit a targeted audience.

Roman armies were chiefly paid in gold and silver coins, and, by the later Roman Empire, silver primarily entered circulation as a form of soldiers' pay.[5] In addition to their pay, the army had always received donatives – gifts of money that were a significant portion of their pay – in gold and silver, a trend that continued at least until the reign of Justinian I.[6] Taxes,

[2] Roman coins are catalogued by type, which is the design found on the coin. I will describe the terminology in more detail towards the end of this section.
[3] According to Hekster (2003: 22-23), we can generally say that bronze coins, rather than gold coins, would have circulated more among the lower strata of society. He cautions, however, by stating that not every Roman would have fallen neatly into a predefined class or that the lower classes would not have ever seen silver or gold coins. Indeed, the circulation of coins was much more nuanced than we can currently speculate, with some bronze types being far rarer than silver or gold. Yarrow (2021: 46-47) states that the 'holy grail' for numismatists would be the reconstruction of how many coins were produced for each particular coin type and issue. Kemmers (2019: 64) says, "although hundreds of thousands of coins have been found, their circulation still elude us." One project, The Roman Imperial Coinage AD 268-276 project (https://ric.mom.fr/en/home), is currently attempting to increase our knowledge of the nuances of coin circulation by tracking down every known instance of each coin type for the years 268-276 CE. The data needed to reflect on these nuances accurately is not yet available for the fourth century. Therefore, my study is open to reinterpretation as more data becomes available and we can make assessesments with more concrete numbers.
[4] Hendy (1985), 449-462. His reforms were needed because coins had become increasingly debased during the third century.
[5] Jones (1956), 15; Kemmers (2019), 49-50; Mitchell (2007), 305; and Sutherland (1974), 273.
[6] Southern & Dixon (1996), 77.

except for *indictiones* – which were levies made in kind –, were also paid in gold coins (*solidi*).[7] On account of these facts, it was the upper echelons of society, along with the military, who handled gold and silver coinage. We can hypothesize, then, that the choice of iconography minted on denominations made from these metals was directed towards soldiers and the higher class or, at the very least, they were the audiences that would have encountered the imagery on these coins more often.

While the audience for gold and silver coins was restricted in a sense, all levels of society would have had access to those bronze coins that were widely circulated.[8] According to Pearce:

> If coinage is a ruler's most convenient means of communicating with his subjects, and he wishes to ensure that his message reaches everyone from the highest to the lowest, it is clear that, of the three metals, bronze can best fulfill this condition.
>
> Pearce (1933), xv

Bronze coins, which paid for most everyday transactions,[9] would have been available to the rich and the poor. By Constantine's reign, bronze coinage communicated simple military, political, and dynastic messages.[10] In addition, the iconography that is found on bronze coins, as we shall see below, is not often echoed on silver and gold coins.[11] This use of different imagery suggests to me that whoever was in charge of the images issued on coins – a topic that I will discuss in more detail shortly – was aware that disparate social classes were handling specific

[7] Harl (1996), 159; Pollard (2000), 215. Harl also mentions that a special tax in gold, taken from the propertied classes, began to be paid in the 360s (1996: 160). It should also be noted that most gold coins from the fourth century are usually well preserved, suggesting that their circulation was relatively short, possibly because of hoarding (Kent 1981: 73). Therefore, it difficult to determine how the 'messages' on gold coins were received, especially if they were immediately stored for safekeeping.

[8] The names of the denominations of the bronze coins struck in late antiquity are difficult to comprehend because inflation caused constant fluctuations in size and weight (Foss 1999: 384). Therefore, I will refer to them simply as 'bronze coins.'

[9] van Ossel (2006), 558-559.

[10] Sutherland (1974), 260.

[11] Elkins (2013), 286; Foss (1999), 383; Kemmers (2019), 27-29; and Pearce (1933), xv. Silver and gold coins travelled further in the empire than their bronze counterparts, which tended to remain local. That silver coins travelled further in the empire is not surprising considering it was used to pay the army.

denominations in specific areas of the empire and so adjusted the images to fit the 'messages' intended for certain demographic populations.

It is plausible, then, that particular iconographic messages were chosen for different levels of society.[12] Would these messages have been noticed, or even understood, by the intended audience? Some scholars – like Burnett and Sear – believe that the Roman populace would have noticed the iconography on coins.[13] Socrates Scholasticus, writing around the middle of the fifth century, indicates that notice was given to coin design. He mentions the people of Antioch, who mocked the emperor Julian for the image of the bull that he had put on his bronze coins. He states,[14]

> *τὸ νόμισμά τε αὐτοῦ ταῦρον ἔχειν, καὶ τὸν κόσμον ἀνατετράφθαι. Ὤ γὰρ δὴ ὁ βασιλεὺς πολὺ δεισιδαίμων, ταύρους τε συνχῶς θύων πρὸς τοῖς βωμοῖς τῶν εἰδώλων, βωμὸν καὶ ταῦρον ἐντυπωθῆναι κεκελεύκει τῷ ἑαυτοῦ νομίσματι.*
>
> They added that the bull which was impressed upon his coin, was a symbol of his having desolated the world. For the emperor, being excessively superstitious, was continually sacrificing bulls on the altars of his idols; and had ordered the impression of a bull and altar be made on his coin.
>
> Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.,* 3.17.4-6

This example from Socrates also demonstrates that the images on the coins were not necessarily always understood. First, Julian's bull coin does not feature an altar.[15] Secondly, the meaning behind the bull coin is unknown, with suggestions ranging from sacrificial animal to a symbol

[12] As Yarrow (2021: 4) points out, "coins were the only mass-produced visual medium in antiquity" and they were used as a link to other images. Coins and their imagery were important not only in fostering a sense of identity and for circualting iconography, but also for the formation of collective memory (Rowan 2022: 41-44). Thus coins were memory devices that could trigger memories of events (such as festivals, games, sacrifices, etc.) and what was propogated at those events. Therefore, coins were not the primary source of the emperor's propaganda, but they were important for their widespread reach.

[13] Burnett (1987), 68; and Sear (1974), 36. Sear believes that everyone would have taken note of the changing reverse types.

[14] The Greek text is taken from R. Hussey (1853) and the English translation is from A. C. Zenos (1890). Julian responds to the mockery of the citizens of Antioch in his *Misopogon* (355). Another ancient source that discusses the coin designs of the emperor is Eusebius, who mentions two coins of Constantine's: one that depicts the emperor looking upwards, as though in prayer (*VC,* 4.15); and the other with the emperor, head veiled, ascending to heaven in a quadriga (*VC*, 4.73). See also: Cameron & Hall (1999), 315-316 and 348-350.

[15] This coin will be discussed in more detail in the Julian section below.

for the emperor, either as a metaphor for the emperor's leadership or the emperor's birth sign.[16] This example illustrates that Romans were looking at the iconography on coins, whether they understood it or not.

The next question we must tackle is: who was the authority behind the choice of iconography on imperial coins? As far back as 1956, Jones stated that scholars were uncertain about who chose the design types and legends on Roman coins.[17] The scholarship on the subject has not progressed much further in recent years, and we are still not entirely sure who held the authority for the iconography on coins. The most common suggestion is that the emperor himself held the authority to choose which designs were placed on his coins.[18] In this way, coins reflect the emperor's propagandistic aims.[19] In the above example with Julian and the people of Antioch, we have already seen that Romans regarded the imagery on coins as the prerogative of the emperor. Julian, responding to the people of Antioch in his *Misopogon*, also implies that he is in charge of the choice of iconography on his coins.[20] Since coins bear the emperor's image and

[16] For a more in-depth discussion, see Woods (2000), 159-161. See also: López Sánchez (2012), 173-174; and Vanderspoel (1998). López Sánchez states that the sacrificial aspect of the bull is not in question, but whether or not there is any additional meaning is. One of the more popular modern theories claims that the bull and star motif symbolizes the cult of Mithras. For this theory, see Barnes (1998), 159-160 and Vanderspoel (1998), 113-115. According to Barnes (1998: 159-160), the bull and two stars motif might represent Mithraism, a cult that Barnes believes was important to Julian. Barnes believes the two stars represent Cautes and Cautopates, two helpers of Mithras who were associated with the stars Aldebaran and Antares. López Sánchez (2012: 173-174) sees a link between the discovery of the Apis bull in Egypt in 362 CE and the minting of these coins in the same year. Mastrocinque (2017: 326) remarks that scholars still have no clear idea of what the bull on the coins of Julian means. Jones (1956: 15) states that it is often difficult to interpret the symbolism on coins since the meaning has been lost to modern scholars. He cautions against deducing elaborate messages from coins. In examining the Mithraic theory, Wood (2000: 166-167) concludes that the bull instead represents Sol because of common elements found on the coins of Gallienus rather than any sort of Mithraic symbolism.
[17] Jones (1956), 14. See also Howgego (1995), 70.
[18] Ando (2000), 215-228; Burnett (1987), 140; and Rantala (2017), 13.
[19] For the value of propaganda on ancient coins, see Rantala (2017), 15-16.
[20] Jul. *Mis.* 355. Burnett (1987: 140) states that the literature of late antiquity assumes that the emperor was in charge of coin design. See also: Eusebius, *VC*, 4.15. However, Burnett (1987: 70) cautions that any action could be attributed to the emperor, so we must be critical of these accounts.

were used as legitimizing devices for usurpers (see below),[21] we can speculate that the emperor was at least aware of the iconography being placed on his coins.

Whether the emperor chose the images himself is not known. It is possible that his officials, such as those in charge of the mints, selected the iconography for him. However, scholars are unsure of the role certain officials in late antiquity took in choosing coin designs. One such official was the *comes sacrarum largitionum* (the finance minister), who oversaw all of the imperial mints.[22] Another official was the *procurator monetae* (the mint master). Each imperial mint had a *procurator monetae* who managed it. Their role in choosing the motifs was likely limited since certain standard designs can be found issued from the various mints across the empire.[23] But even if lower officials, such as the *procurator monetae,* did have a choice on what designs their mints used, they would have shown respect to the emperor, a visual equivalent to the panegyric.[24] Indeed, those in charge would have hardly chosen any messages that could have potentially offended the emperor in fear of retribution. The image the emperor wished to portray to his subjects would have been carefully considered, and any propaganda on the coins would have reflected the outward projection of his reign.

Consequently, I agree with the current scholarship on the subject[25] that the emperor would have had some input, either directly or indirectly, on the designs chosen for his coins and that these designs were intended to present the emperor's reign in a certain glorified way to the Roman populace. Before I begin my examination of fourth-century coins, I will discuss some of

[21] Ando (2000), 226.
[22] Burnett (1987), 140; and Lenski (2006), 190.
[23] Burnett (1987), 140. It seems as though general design instructions were sent to the different mints, allowing room for variations. We will see this in more detail as I analyze the coins of the fourth century.
[24] Rantala (2017), 13; and Wallace-Hadrill (1986), 67.
[25] See, for example, Garipzanov (2017), 327-328; Hoyer (2016), 77; and Rantala (2017), 15. According to Howgego (2005: 16), coins reflect elite identity, as no matter who controlled the mints, they would have been members of the elite.

the key technical terms present throughout this chapter, such as *reverse*, *obverse*, *type*, *legend*, *field*, *exergue*, and *mint mark*. The terms are important, as they inform the decisions I made in classifying the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho on coins.

Roman coins have two sides of iconography, an obverse and a reverse. The *obverse* side of the coin typically features a bust of the emperor or another member of the imperial family. On the other hand, the *reverse* side can depict various iconographical themes that numismatists often use to group coins into different types. As we shall see throughout this chapter, when a chi-rho or tau-rho appears on a coin, they are usually found on the reverse. It is much more infrequent for a chi-rho or a tau-rho to appear on a coin's obverse. Mints often issued several coin variants throughout an emperor's rule, combining different obverse and reverse images. For example, a reverse image of a soldier could be combined with a multitude of obverse images, such as the emperor with or without a diadem, the emperor's sons with or without a wreath, etcetera. Therefore, the various variants can be grouped to form *types* that allow numismatists to study patterns of use.

Roman coins have several other key terms that are relevant to my analysis. Typically appearing on the obverse, the *legend* is the writing around the coin's border. The field and exergue only appear on the reverse of coins. The *field* is the blank space around the image, whereas the *exergue* is the space below the image. The exergue is usually delineated from the rest of the field by a line, and this is the space where the coin's mint mark (see below) is often located.[26] Frequently – as will become evident throughout this chapter – the tau-rho and the chi-rho can be found in the field of the coin as a stand-alone symbol; in other words, the symbols are frequently located slightly apart from the main image of the design type.

[26] Sear (2002), 70.

The *mint marks* on Roman coins can be composed of several elements, including certain letters, that indicate: *pecunia* (P), *sacra moneta* (SM), or *moneta* (M); the city where the mint was located (for example, CONS = Constantinople); and the *officina*, or the specific workshop, where the coin was created (such as *prima* (P), *secunda* (S), etcetera).[27] In addition, stand-alone images (such as crescents, palms, chi-rhos, and tau-rhos) can be found in the exergue or field of coins as control marks. They are not integrated with the rest of the coin's iconographic theme. Sear states that these symbols indicate the specific issue, or production run, of the coin and therefore help numismatists date particular issue runs.[28] Since these marks indicate a particular issue – from a specific mint – the emperor (or central authority) would not have necessarily controlled their use.[29] However, Grierson and Mays note that if a symbol is found across several mints – as is the case for several of the types we will encounter with the chi-rho and tau-rho – there may have been instruction given from a central authority to use the symbol as an issue mark.[30] Because 'issue mark' – rather than 'mint mark' – is a more accurate description of what these symbols were used on coins for, I will use the term 'issue mark' henceforth.

For the purposes of my analysis, I have separated the symbols that are integrated within the iconographic design of the coin from those that are not; in other words, those that appear within the main design or those that are either a stand-alone symbol in the field (or exergue) or a

[27] Sear (2002), 70. See also Grierson & Mays (1992), 53. The *officinae* from Greek provinces are indicated with Greek letters. Under Valentinian, silver and gold coins were marked OB (*obryza* "pure gold") and PS (*pusulatum* "pure silver"), respectively.
[28] Sear (2002), 70. These symbols are found more commonly in the fourth century and most often on bronze coins (Grierson & Mays 1992: 56). Grierson and Mays (1992: 56) state that the exact meaning of these symbols is unknown but they hypothesize they were used to identify issues for control reasons. Therefore, coins could be traced back to their mint and whoever worked on a particular issue, making them accountable for any mistakes in quality.
[29] Grierson & Mays (1992), 56.
[30] Grierson & Mays (1992), 87. Using the chi-rho and tau-rho in the field or exergue of the coin would not have differentiated mints (as a mint mark), but, rather, different production issues (as an issue – or control – mark) from various mints. I believe, therefore, that it is important for my language to reflect more accurately the function of the symbols on the coins. It should be noted, however, that most of my sources refer to the symbols in these capacities as mint marks (or, more rarely, mention that the symbols appear in the field of the coin).

part of the issue mark. This distinction is essential when attempting to read the semiotic meaning behind the symbols, especially when they appear as a part of the iconographic design of the coins, where there is a higher probability that the emperor was involved in the decision.

All of the reverse coin types issued during the fourth century, from 312 CE until the deaths of Arcadius and Honorius, are listed in Appendix A, which is an alphabetical typology that condenses the issue variants into one overarching type.[31] When I refer to any types in this chapter, I am referencing the typology I created that can be found in Appendix A. All of the coins in the *RIC* were examined, except for some bronze multiples (or medallions) issued from Rome, since they were often commemorative pieces.[32] I will still discuss those multiples that feature the chi-rho or tau-rho in my analysis, but it ought to be remembered that these bronze medallions were special issues and, therefore, not in common circulation. On the other hand, gold and silver multiples could still be used as circulating currency, so they were included in my results.[33] I will begin with a discussion of the coins minted under Constantine I, from the Battle of the Milvian Bridge until he died in 337 CE.

[31] According to Metcalf (2012, 4), the various principle images on coins are referred to as 'types.' Since there is very little consensus among scholars about distinct types and their variants (Kemmers 2019: 9) and so little work has been done on the coins of the fourth century, I created my own typology. In order to compile Appendix A, I amalgamated the coin descriptions found in *RIC Volumes VII-X*. I then compiled together all variant issues to create a master list of types. Coin types were deemed distinct only if the reverse iconography and the reverse legend differed. If a type had a minor distinction, such as the addition of a captive, it was considered a variant of the main type. In cases where the similarities of types remained unclear based on their descriptions – which could vary across volumes – I referenced the images whenever possible.

[32] Toynbee (1944), 15. For more information and some examples of the chi-rho on late fourth century bronze medallions (also called contorniates), see Mondello's 2019 chapter "Using and Reusing Tokens: Some Remarks about Christian Graffiti on Contorniates."

[33] Toynbee (1944), 22.

5.2 THE COINS OF CONSTANTINE I

Despite Constantine's conversion to Christianity in 312 CE, traditional Roman deities continued to appear on imperial coins for another decade, particularly images of Sol, Mars, and Jupiter.[34] Since these gods are found on coin types issued from several mints, a central authority would have decided to continue using these motifs. The emperor, therefore, must have approved (or, at least, been aware of) the decision; it was not the independent choice of a mint master who was resistant to change.

By the time Constantine had become sole emperor in 324 CE, all traditional Roman deities – except personifications like Victory – had been removed from the coins. The elimination of Sol, Mars, and Jupiter can be interpreted as the emperor's separation from traditional "paganism." While a personification like Victory could still represent a *Christian* emperor's military power, images of Sol and Mars, which were more explicitly linked to the worship of past non-Christian emperors, would have contradicted the worship of Constantine's new God. With the gradual removal of traditional deities from Constantine's coins, we must next examine what types of imagery came to replace them and if the imperial iconographic program included the chi-rho and the tau-rho.

[34] Sol, the deity worshipped by Constantine's father, Constantius Chlorus, is an unsurprising motif (see Jones 1978: 66). The personification Victory also appears on Constantine's coins between 313-316 CE. See *RIC VII* Lyons 28 and 29; Trier 6-10, 32, 33, 66 and 67; Arles 13, 33, 34, 49-51 and 70; Rome 14 and 15; Ticinum 25, 36 and 40; and Siscia 3-13 and 15-17. For coins with Sol, see: *RIC VII* London 5-7, 8, 9-20, 27-28, 32-35, 43-49, 53-63, 68-84, 88-131 and 137-153; Lyons 1-9, 15-50 and 51-62; Trier 39-48, 70-76, 92-107, 124-137, 146-168 and 175-183; Arles 14-22, 35-47, 56-68, 71-77, 79-112, 118-122, 136-141, 144-158, 164-166, 169-171, 180-182 and 184; Rome 1-5, 18-24, 27-43, 45-59, 78-85, 97, 98, 129, 130 and 136; Ticinum 1-4, 7-10, 14-17, 20-21, 43, 44, 45, 46, 56, 61-69, 79-81, 99 and 108; Aquileia 1-5, 14-20 and 35; Siscia 14, 24, 25, and 31-38; Sirmium 3, 8, 21, 22 and 31; and Thessalonica 8, 9, 23 and 66-71. For coins with Mars, see: *RIC VII* London 4, 24 and 25; Lyons 10-14; Trier 15, 49-55, 61, 68-69, 77-83, 108-118 and 192-194; Arles 23-29, 115-117, 129-135, 143, 161-163, 172, 179 and 183; Rome 6-13, 25 and 26; and Ticinum 5, 6, 11-13, 18, 19, 23, 24 and 47; Siscia 29 and 30; Sirmium 28-30; and Thessalonica 15-18 and 22. For coins with Jupiter, see: *RIC VII* Arles 123-128, 142, 159, 160 and 167; Rome 64, 86, 99-101 and 131-133; Ticinum 70-72 and 97; Aquileia 6-8; Siscia 18-22; and Thessalonica 19.

Table 5.1 The various coin types issued under Constantine I that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A5	'She-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus'	☧	Issue mark	Arles	Bronze
A34	'Victories holding wreath (or shield) with *votum*'	☧	Main design	Siscia	Bronze
A42	'Victory holding wreath (or trophy) and palm (or wreath; or trophy)'	☩	Issue mark	Antioch	Gold
A45	'Victory, on a prow, holding spear (or sceptre) and shield'	☧	Issue mark	Arles	Bronze
A73	'Emperor holding *labarum* and sceptre (or spear)'	☧	Main design	Trier	Silver
A78	'Emperor, surrounded by soldiers, being crowned by Victory'	☧	Main design	Ticinum	Silver
A94	'*Labarum* piercing serpent'	☧	Main design	Constantinople	Bronze
A100	'Standard flanked by captives'	☧	Issue mark	Aquileia, Siscia, Thessalonica, Ticinum	Bronze
A103	'Soldiers with spear and shield'	☧	Issue mark	Arles	Bronze

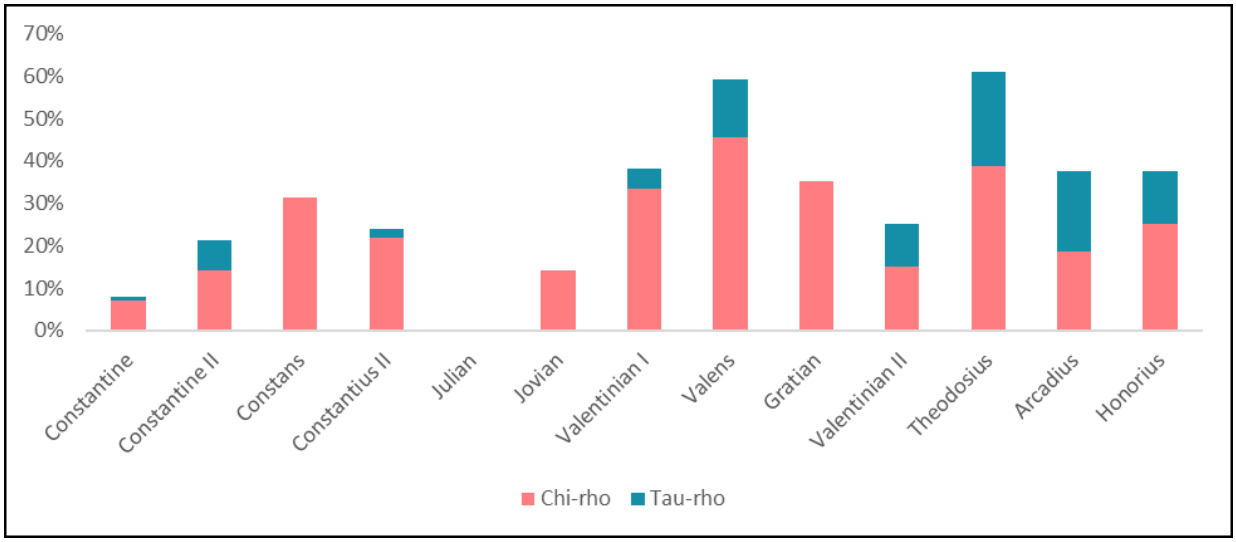

Figure 5.1 A graph of the percentages of types featuring the chi-rho and tau-rho on the coins of fourth-century emperors.

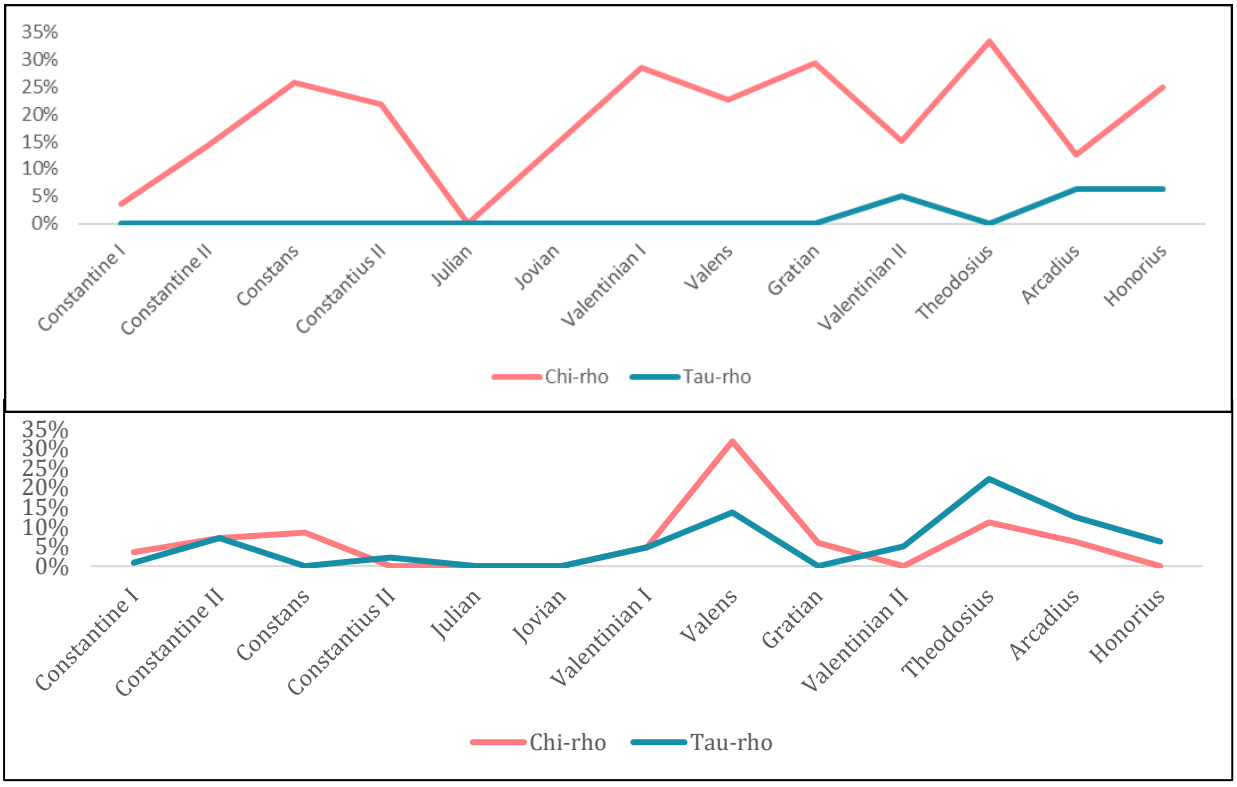

Figure 5.2 A graph of the percentages of types featuring the chi-rho and tau-rho as a main design element (above) and as an issue mark (below) on the coins of the fourth-century emperors.

An interesting observation about the coins of Constantine in the period after his conversion is the lack of 'Christian' imagery. **Table 5.1** lists all of the types the chi-rho and tau-rho appear on the coins of Constantine as found in *Volume VII* of the *RIC*. Of the 112 distinct types issued under Constantine's authority, only 9 (7.44%) feature chi-rho or tau-rho. Furthermore, as indicated by **Table 5.1**, they usually appear in the coin's exergue or field (i.e. as an issue mark). Only 4 (3.31%) of the types feature the symbols as a part of the main iconographic design of the coin. These statistics can be found in **Figure 5.1**, which gives the percentage of chi-rhos and tau-rhos minted during each emperor's reign in the fourth century.[35] **Figure 5.2** divides the statistics further by presenting the percentage of chi-rhos and tau-rhos

[35] Each emperor's percentages were calculated by dividing the number of types with either a chi-rho or a tau-rho by the number of types issued under each emperor.

used as issue marks compared to iconographic design elements.[36] It is important to note that various factors, including the rarity of the type, the denomination, and the number of minor variants – all of which can contribute to the frequency of distribution – were not considered when tabulating these percentages.

The earliest instance of either symbol on the coins of Constantine is the chi-rho that appears on silver multiples issued from Ticinum in 315 CE (see **Figure 5.3**; Type A78). The obverse of this silver multiple depicts Constantine, who is wearing a high-crested helmet with a chi-rho. The chi-rho appears in a disk at the base of the helmet's crest.[37] On the reverse, the emperor, who stands in military dress amongst nine soldiers, is being crowned by Victory. Bruun speculates that the use of the chi-rho on Constantine's helmet is emblematic of the emperor's military power.[38] The reverse legend, which proclaims that the emperor is the saviour of the republic (SALVS REIPVBLICAE), lends credence to Bruun's supposition. In further support of the military connotation, these silver multiples were issued to celebrate Constantine's *decennalia*

Figure 5.3 Silver medallion of Constantine I minted in Ticinum (*RIC VII* Ticinum 36; Type A78). The obverse features a chi-rho, which appears at the top of the emperor's helmet. 315 CE.
© Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Auction 106, lot 1051.

[36] Percentages were calculated in the same way as in Figure 5.1. See Ch.5, fn. 35.
[37] *RIC VII* Ticinum 36. It should be noted that although Alföldi believes that several bronze coins from Ticinum also have a chi-rho engraved on the helmets, Bruun states that these coins are quite exceptional and may be considered an error of the engraver (1966: 62).
[38] Bruun (1966), 63.

and, according to Stephenson, were only given out to important officials, such as army officers.[39] While the military iconography of this type cannot be ignored, it is not easy to separate the presence of the chi-rho from Constantine's conversion entirely, especially since it occurred only three years prior. A Christian signification does not necessarily preclude a military interpretation of the coin, however, since – as we have seen in Chapter 4 – it was the chi-rho that Eusebius claimed Constantine used to overcome his enemies in 312 CE and later wore on his helmet. In addition, I propose that some of the important officials who received the silver multiples as imperial gifts may have even been at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, which ties together the military iconography with the chi-rho on the emperor's helmet.

A series of bronze issues minted at Siscia in 319 CE contain similar iconography to the silver multiples from Ticinum (Type A34). Once again, a chi-rho is engraved on the emperor's helmet. On this issue, the chi-rho is located on the helmet's side rather than in a disc on the front.[40] The reverse depicts two Victories holding a shield – inscribed with VOT PR – supported on an altar. The reverse legend calls the emperor the VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC PERP (perpetual leader of prosperous victory). Like the silver multiples from Ticinum, the chi-rho here may have referenced the emperor's victory in battle, in addition to – or even, perhaps, more than – a symbol of his religious convictions. Significantly, this issue has the emperor's *vota populi romani*, vows of the Roman people for the emperor's continued success. The coins foreshadow

[39] Stephenson (2009), 173. Lenski (2006: 20), however, cautions against reading too much into the iconography since the issue was scarcely minted – with only three extant examples – and it might have been designed for Christian recipients. According to Wigg-Wolf (2014: 137) in his article "Constantine's Silver Multiple from Ticinum (*RIC* 36): 'one small step' or 'one giant leap'" these silver medallions were small issues. The symbol on the emperor's helmet is hardly more than 1mm in diameter, so barely visible to the naked eye.

[40] *RIC VII* Siscia 61. Bruun links this VICTORIAE LAETEA PRINC PERP issue with the issue from Ticinum that he believes were an engraver's slip (see Ch.5, fn. 38). Unlike the Ticinum issue, Bruun does not suggest that the coins from Siscia were caused by an engraver's mistake (1966: 63). In addition, the fact that coins from both mints contain the image of a chi-rho on the emperor's helmet may suggest that the coins were supposed to have the symbol engraved on them. Therefore, perhaps Bruun, like Alföldi, should have considered the bronze issue from Ticinum valid.

Figure 5.4 Bronze coin of Constantine I minted in Siscia (*RIC VII* Siscia 61; Type A34). The obverse features a star on the emperor's helmet. Another issue from this series features a chi-rho in place of the star. 319 CE.

Optatian's patterned poetry (see Chapter 4), which connects the chi-rho to the *vota* and thus, I believe, equates the emperor's success to the apotropaic power of the symbol. However, as with the silver multiples from Ticinum, these coins occur relatively infrequently (in only one of a series of five coin variants minted), and only a few examples from this particular version have been found.[41] Even if these issues were intended to have Christian significance, the audience viewing them (let alone understanding them) would have been limited. Additionally, with the other four variants of the type from Siscia being issued without the chi-rho (see **Figure 5.4**),[42] it is hard to determine if the Roman viewer would have noticed the symbol in the emperor's helmet at all.

After these two limited issues, the chi-rho began to appear as an issue mark used by several mints. A series of bronze coins with the reverse legend VIRTVS EXERCIT – referring to the emperor as the army's strength – feature a standard inscribed with VOT XX and flanked by captives (see **Figure 5.5**; Type A100).[43] These coins were not limited to one mint but were issued periodically between 319 and 321 CE in Thessalonica, Ticinum, Aquileia, and Siscia.[44] Although it is questionable whether these coins were meant to convey any Christian significance or not,[45] they may have signified support for the Constantinian dynasty. Two of the mints

[41] Bruun (1966), 63. This type has a rarity of r^5.
[42] For example, see Lenski (2006), 10.
[43] The obverse can feature either Constantine or Licinius, but the mints were all under the control of Constantine.
[44] *RIC VII* Thessalonica 82, 83 and 117-122; Ticinum 118-121, 125, 126 and 129; Aquileia 58-62; and Siscia 138 and 139.
[45] Bruun (1966), 62. Bruun states that the chi-rho and tau-rho as "mint marks" were probably not meant to be viewed as Christian signs.

mentioned above, Siscia and Thessalonica, came under Constantine's control after his first civil war with Licinius (ca. 316 CE), and I speculate that the *procurator monetae* from each mint might have used the chi-rho as a way to ingratiate himself (and the city) to Constantine.

Figure 5.5 Bronze coin of Constantine I minted in Aquileia (*RIC VII* Aquileia 58; Type A100). The reverse features two bound captives flanking a standard. A chi-rho appears in the left field. 320 CE.
With permission of wildwinds.com

The mint at Arles, in particular, used the chi-rho as an issue mark over a few years on three different bronze types. These coins were all minted between 334 and 336 CE after Constantine had become the sole emperor. With the reverse legend GLORIA EXERCITVS, one type depicts two helmeted soldiers, each of whom holds a spear and rests a hand on a shield. Between the soldiers stands a *vexillum* (standard) at which they are looking (see **Figure 5.6**; Type A103).[46] The second type has the personifications of Constantinopolis (on the obverse) and Victory (on the reverse). Victory, who is holding a spear in one hand and resting her other on a shield, is standing on the prow of a ship (Type A45).[47] The final type depicts the personification of Roma on the obverse and the She-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus on the reverse (see **Figure 5.7**; Type A5).[48] Once again, it is difficult to determine the intention behind using the chi-rho as an issue mark, especially as it was only one identifying mark amongst

[46] *RIC VII* Arles 381-384 and 394-399. On some of these coins, the chi-rho is attached to the *vexillum* in a banner, thus forming the *labarum* (see below). These coins, therefore, might be better categorized as using the symbol as a part of the main iconography of the coin.
[47] *RIC VII* Arles 386 and 401.
[48] *RIC VII* Arles 385 and 400.

Figure 5.6 Bronze coin of Constantine I minted at Arles (*RIC VII* Arles 381; Type A103). The reverse depicts two soldiers, each of whom holds a standard. A chi-rho appears between the two standards. 334 CE.
With permission of wildwinds.com, Victor Clark collection

several.[49] The decision would have been made at the level of Arles' *procurator monetae* – because he was a Christian himself, he wished to impress the emperor, or both – since this was not a consistent practice across the mints of the empire during this period.[50] In Chapter 3, I discussed a few pre-Constantinian coins that feature the chi-rho as an identifying mark without Christian signification, such as the coins of Ptolemy III. The coins from Arles may have similarly employed the symbol and, while the resurgence of the chi-rho as an issue mark in the fourth century may have been significant for certain circles – such as elite members of court –, I question whether the symbol, in this capacity and at this date, would have even been noticed.

Figure 5.7 Bronze coin of Constantine I minted at Arles (*RIC VII* Arles 400; Type A5). The reverse features a chi-rho above the image of the She-Wolf suckling Romulus and Remus. 336 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1984.146.1658)

[49] For example, a wreath (*RIC VII* Arles 375), a crescent (*RIC VII* Arles 354), and a palm branch (*RIC VII* Arles 364) are also used as identifying marks.
[50] Bruun (1966), 62. The decision would not have come from a higher official like the *comes sacrarum largitionum* or the emperor. Bardill (2012: 221) concurs with Bruun's conclusion.

The first and only time that a tau-rho is used on the coins of Constantine is on gold *solidi* minted at Antioch between 336 and 337 CE.[51] The tau-rho appears as an issue mark on a series of VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG coins that depict Victory, who is walking towards the left and holding a trophy and palm branch (see **Figure 5.8**; Type A42). As the mint at Antioch was not one of the mints to use the chi-rho as an issue mark, this might demonstrate a preference for one symbol over the other in different parts of the empire; in this case, the use of the tau-rho at the mint the furthest to the east. However, this is only a tentative supposition, as there is only one instance of the use of the tau-rho on a coin type under Constantine's authority, and it is at a later date than any of the coins we have examined thus far.

Figure 5.8 *Solidus* of Constantine I minted in Antioch (*RIC VII* Antioch 100; Type A42). The reverse features Victory holding a trophy. A tau-rho appears in the left field. 336 – 337 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. R. 165).

A few years after the defeat of his co-emperor Licinius, a new type of iconography began to appear on the coins of Constantine I. These SPES PVBLIC bronze coins were struck in Constantinople between 327 and 328 CE (see **Figure 5.9**; Type A94; refer back to **Figure 1.6** also). The reverse design depicts a *vexillum* with three disks, above which sits a chi-rho. The *vexillum* is piercing a serpent.[52] This *vexillum*, appearing for the first time on imperial coinage as

[51] *RIC VII* Antioch 98, 99, 100, 101.
[52] *RIC VII* Constantinople 19 and 26. It should be noted that these coins are extremely scarce, with a rarity of r^4 and r^5, respectively.

the *labarum*,[53] represents Constantine's victory over Licinius.[54] Although this interpretation is plausible – as Constantine had defeated Licinius only three years previously – Stephenson stresses that the imagery would have reminded viewers of the mythology surrounding Apollo slaying Python or Cadmus slaying the dragon, both of which occurred before the founding of a city.[55] But despite this hypothesis, there is still a military significance to the iconography on these coins: the emperor, the hope of the republic (*spes public*), has defeated his, and Rome's, enemy. While Roman viewers might not have read Christian significance into the presence of the chi-rho or associated the serpentine imagery with the mythological iconography of the past, they would have noted the military symbolism of the *vexillum*,[56] which had appeared on Roman coins for centuries.

Figure 5.9 *Nummus* of Constantine I minted in Constantinople (*RIC VII* Constantinople 19; Type A94). The reverse depicts a standard, above which is placed a chi-rho, piercing a serpent. 327 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1890,0804.11).

The final type issued during the reign of Constantine that (possibly) includes a chi-rho is the CONSTANTINVS AVG silver multiple from Trier, minted between 336 and 337 CE (Type A73).[57] On these multiples, the emperor holds a sceptre and *vexillum*, some variants of which

[53] For more on the *labarum*, see Chapters 1 and 3.
[54] Bardill (2012), 143. According to Bardill, this is supported by a letter written by Constantine, which refers to Licinius as a dragon/snake.
[55] Stephenson (2016), 111. Bardill (2012: 143-144) also mentions this theory.
[56] The *vexillum* can be found on the coins of most emperors, including Augustus, Trajan, Hadrian, and Septimius Severus (to name a few). See *RIC Volumes I-VI.*
[57] *RIC VII* Trier 579. It is important to note, however, that the existence of the chi-rho on this issue is only a possibility mentioned by Bruun in the *RIC* in a footnote. King (1987: 108) does not mention the chi-rho variant. Several of the coin types found in Table 5.1 are included because a footnote in the *RIC* mentions variants that might have a chi-rho. I have included them in my analysis to be as thorough as possible. The exclusion of the symbols

might have a chi-rho (thus forming a *labarum)*. Constantine's son Constans, as we shall see, continued to use a similar version of this type (Type D1[58]) in Trier with the legend PAX AUGVSTORVM. So although it is inconclusive, the appearance of a variant with the chi-rho in Trier under Constans in the years following Constantine's death suggests it may indeed have been used during the reign of Constantine.

As 'pagan' iconography began to disappear from coins during the reign of Constantine, the chi-rho (and, in one instance, the tau-rho) was slowly introduced on several different coin types. However, as we have seen, the chi-rho is not a dominant feature in the iconographic design of the coins, often appearing as an issue mark. Instead, the traditional gods (Sol, Mars, and Jupiter) were replaced with military themes. For example, the standard reverse type for the basic bronze coin minted during the 330s features two soldiers standing with one, or two, imperial standards.[59] Victory, too, remained a popular figure on Constantine's coins.[60] It is also worth noting that the three traditional Roman gods (Sol, Mars, Jupiter) that lasted the longest on Constantine's coins all had military connotations. Therefore, I propose that Constantine was more intent on propagating his military successes, both before and after his conversion, rather than his religious devotion.

---

from the primary descriptions of the coins is a poignant comment about the (perceived) insignificance of the chi-rho and tau-rho on Constantine's coins.

[58] Type D1 was separated from Type A73 because the emperor is not holding a scepter and the legend is different.

[59] For examples of this GLORIA EXERCITVS type, see the index of *RIC VII*, p. 740.

[60] *RIC VII* London 154-182, 289 and 290; Lyons 28, 29, 63-90, 209, 212, 214, 219, 222 and 241; Trier 6-10, 32, 33, 66, 67, 208, 209, 213-235, 429, 435-438, 469, 492, 498, 499, 513, 523, 530, 543, 548, 554, 563, 569-571 and 589; Arles 13, 33, 34, 49-51,70, 185-201, 257, 258, 344, 352, 357, 363, 369, 374, 380, 386, 393, 401, 408 and 416; Rome 14, 15, 140-142, 157,164, 256-261, 263, 273, 274, 296, 332-334, 339-341, 343, 355, 371, 373-375, 377, 378, 387, 397 and 407; Ticinum 25, 36, 40, 50, 57-59, 82-96, 100, 109, 110, 118, 119, 121, 125, 126, 129, 179 and 193-197; Aquileia 30, 35, 37, 38, 123, 129, 130 and 137; Siscia 3-13, 15-17, 47-108, 115, 118, 125, 126, 132, 133, 139, 210, 212, 213, 224, 225, 229, 230, 233, 234, 241, 242-244, 248-250, 257 and 258. Sirmium 8-13, 23-27, 32-37, 47-52, 56 and 63-66; Thessalonica 6, 7, 10-14, 19, 59-65, 131, 138-140, 147, 148, 152, 168, 173-175, 177-182, 188, 189, 194, 205, 208, 214-217 and 330; Heraclea 101, 102, 115, 120, 125, 130, 135 and 144-147; Constantinople 2, 3, 5, 6, 18, 25, 29-38, 43, 46-52, 54, 63, 68-72, 79, 86, 90-98, 101, 107, 108, 114-120, 126-128 and 136; Nicomedia 56, 63-65, 70, 103, 107, 110-113, 117, 139-141, 160, 162, 163, 165-168, 171, 172, 175-180, 185, 186 and 196; Cyzicus 22, 23, 73-75, 92, 93, 107, 108, 120 and 121; Antioch 45a, 49, 83, 92, 93, 96, 98-107 and 114; and Alexandria 64 and 71.

The chi-rho appears mainly on bronze types during this period (Types A5, A34, A45, A94, A100, and A103), while the tau-rho is only found on one gold type (Type A42).[61] Although the chi-rho is mainly used as an issue mark, it is a part of the iconographic design on the silver multiples from Trier (Type A73) and Ticinum (Type A78). This usage indicates that those towards whom silver coins were geared – in other words, soldiers and the higher class – would have had more contact with the symbol within an iconographic context on Constantinian coinage. Still, the VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC PERP bronzes from Siscia (Type A34) and the SPES PVBLIC bronzes from Constantinople (Type A94) are the most graphically significant coins to feature a chi-rho during Constantine's reign. These bronze coins would have spread the image of the chi-rho, used within a military milieu, to multiple socio-economic classes.

Most instances of the chi-rho that we have so far discussed are found on types minted in the Western part of the empire.[62] The sole use of the tau-rho, on the other hand, comes from the VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG type from Antioch, which was issued near the end of Constantine's reign and many years after he had taken control of the mint.[63] Thus, there was a clear preference in the Western mints to use the chi-rho, even after Constantine had gained control of the Eastern mints.

It is important to note that the mints under Licinius' control included neither the tau-rho nor the chi-rho on their coins. If, as I have argued above, mints used these symbols as issue marks that held little Christian symbolism at the time, it raises the question of why certain mints – Siscia, Thessalonica, and Antioch – did not issue them on their coins until after Constantine

[61] The restricted use of tau-rhos on gold coins is not especially noteworthy, as it only appears as an issue mark on one type.
[62] There are two exceptions: the VIRTVS EXERCIT type from Thessalonica after Constantine took control of the mint; and the SPES PVBLIC type from Constantinople, minted shortly after the mint was founded.
[63] Bruun came to the same conclusion, stating that Antioch was the only mint in the East to strike either a chi-rho or tau-rho symbol on their coins under Constantine (1962: 32). Although other scholars mention this coin type (see, for example: Bardill 2012: 220; and Garipzanov 2018: 54), they do not discuss it in any detail.

became sole emperor. This observation is especially relevant as the chi-rho was a Greek symbol in a Latin territory, where Christianity had expanded the least.[64] In terms of social semiotics, the absence of the chi-rho from the mints under Licinius' control does not demand that we read Christian signification into the symbol since the cultural and contextual development of the symbol was within the imperial court of Constantine. As mentioned in Chapter 2, there was a direct visual link between the chi-rho and the Constantinian dynasty. We also saw in Chapter 2 that it takes authority to create a symbol and these coins, especially the examples with the *labarum*, indicate that Constantine had that authority.

Conversely, it also does not rule out Christian signification since – as we encountered in the last Chapter – the chi-rho was the Christian apotropaic talisman of the Constantinian dynasty. I believe that within imperial circles, the chi-rho was closely connected to Constantine and his family, which explains why the Eastern mints did not use the symbol when they were still under the control of Licinius. Based on the evidence from Constantine's coins, if the term 'Constantinian' monogram were to apply to any symbol, it would be the chi-rho – and not the tau-rho.

5.3 THE SONS OF CONSTANTINE I

5.3.1 Historical Background and Division of the Mints

After Constantine I's death in 337 CE, the empire was divided amongst his three surviving sons. All of them had been raised as Christians, and it seems as though Constantine's plan for his succession would be a new – Christian – tetrarchy composed of his three sons and one of his

[64] Bruun (1962), 32. For an examination of Christianity in the West, see Brown (2012: 31-34).

half-nephews, Dalmatius.[65] Before his death, he had already sent his sons and nephew to govern over some regions of his empire: Constantine II (337-340), his oldest son, oversaw the dioceses of Gallia, Septem Provinciae, Hispania and Britannia; Constantius II (337-361) governed the dioceses of Oriens, Pontica and Asiana; Constans (337-350) ruled Italy, Illyricum and Africa, or, in other words, the centre of the empire; and Dalmatius administered Thraecia and Moesia.[66] Unfortunately, none of them had been elevated to the rank of Augustus, and when Constantine died in May of 337 CE, the empire remained without an emperor until September, when his sons were officially proclaimed Augusti by the army.[67] Thus, the empire was split into three parts, and each of the imperial mints fell under the authority of one of the three emperors.

Table 5.2 The various coin types issued under Constantine II that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	⁋	Issue mark	Lyons	Bronze
A103	'Soldiers with spear and shield'	⁋	Issue mark	Lyons	Bronze
			Main design	Lyons	Bronze
D1	'Emperor holding a standard'	⁋	Main design	Trier	Silver

[65] Odahl (2004), 263-264. Constantine II and Constans were Nicene Christians, the prevalent Christian orthodoxy at the time that dominated the Western empire (see Kirsch 2004: 198). Their brother Constantius II, on the other hand, supported Arianism, the dominant form of Christianity in the Eastern empire (see Downey 1969: 42; and Kirsch 2004: 198). Constantius II even supported a number of anti-pagan measures, like having the Altar of Victory removed from the Senate house in 357 CE (Cameron 1993: 74).
[66] Odahl (2004), 264.
[67] Mitchell (2007), 70.

Table 5.3 The various coin types issued under Constans that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A42	'Victory holding wreath (or trophy) and palm (or wreath; or trophy)'	☧	Issue mark	Siscia	Bronze
A73	'Emperor holding *labarum* and sceptre (or spear)'	☧	Main design	Aquileia	Gold
				Aquileia, Siscia	Silver
A95	'Emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or sceptre; or trophy) and shield'	☧	Main design	Lyons	Silver
				Aquileia, Siscia	Bronze
A101	'Three (or four) standards'	☧	Main design	Rome	Silver
A103	'Soldiers with spear and shield'	☧	Issue mark	Aquileia	Bronze
			Main design	Siscia	Bronze
B11	'Emperor, holding *labarum* and spear (or sceptre), crowned by Victory'	☧	Main design	Aquileia, Siscia, Thessalonica, Trier	Gold
B16	'Emperor, on a galley, holding phoenix (or Victory) on globe and *labarum*'	☧	Main design	Arles, Aquileia, Lyons, Rome, Siscia, Thessalonica, Trier	Bronze
B22	'Soldier spearing horseman'	☧	Issue mark	Aquileia	Bronze
C2	'Genii holding wreath with *votum'*	☧	Main design	Siscia	Gold
C7	'Emperors, on thrones, holding sceptres'	☧	Main design	Siscia	Gold
D1	'Emperor holding a standard'	☧	Main design	Trier	Silver

Table 5.4 The various coin types issued under Constantius II that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A34	'Victories holding wreath (or shield) with *votum*'	☧	Main design	Rome	Bronze
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	☧	Main design	Thessalonica	Bronze
A73	'Emperor holding *labarum* and sceptre (or spear)'	☧	Main design	Siscia	Bronze
A95	'Emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or sceptre; or trophy) and shield'	☧	Main design	Thessalonica	Silver
				Cyzicus, Constantinople, Heraclea, Nicomedia, Thessalonica	Bronze
B6	'Roma and Constantinopolis, seated on thrones, supporting shield (or wreath) with *votum'*	☧	Main design	Trier	Gold
				Rome	Silver
		☩	Issue mark	Thessalonica	Gold
B11	'Emperor, holding *labarum* and spear (or sceptre), crowned by Victory'	☧	Main design	Siscia, Thessalonica	Gold
				Sirmium, Siscia	Bronze
B12	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or Victory on globe) and raising kneeling female'	☧	Main design	Aquileia	Bronze
B13	'Emperor holding two *labara'*	☧	Main design	Sirmium, Siscia, Thessalonica	Bronze
B16	'Emperor, on a galley, holding phoenix (or Victory) on globe and *labarum*'	☧	Main design	Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Cyzicus, Heraclea, Nicomedia	Bronze
B24	'Chi-rho flanked by alpha and omega'	☧	Main design	Trier	Bronze

Constantine II gained authority over three mints: Trier, Lyons, and Arles.[68] Three (21.43%) of the 14 coin types issued under Constantine II's authority feature either the chi-rho or the tau-rho (see **Table 5.2**). His brother Constans oversaw the mints at Rome, Aquileia, Siscia, and Thessalonica and, when Constantine II died in 340 CE, he gained control of the three mints his brother had had jurisdiction over. Of the 35 distinct types minted under Constans, 9 (25.71%)

[68] The mint in London was not active at this time.

have a chi-rho, while none feature the tau-rho (see **Table 5.3**). Lastly, Constantius II controlled all of the mints in the East, which included Heraclea, Constantinople, Cyzicus, Nicomedia, Antioch, and Alexandria. Following the death of the usurper Magnentius in 353 CE, Constantius II took over control of the whole empire – and, consequently, all of the mints – until he died in 361 CE.[69] Even though Constantius II ruled for a longer period than either of his brothers and eventually had authority over the mints of the entire empire, his coins feature the chi-rho and tau-rho less than those of Constans, and only 10 of the 46 different types (21.74%) minted during his rule feature either symbol (see **Table 5.4**).

The usurper Magnentius overthrew Constans in 350 CE, took control of his mints and opened a new mint at Amiens.[70] Scholars are uncertain about whether or not Magnentius was a 'pagan.'[71] When Magnentius overthrew Constans – with the support of the 'pagan' aristocracy at Rome – he ordered the reopening of 'pagan' shrines and allowed sacrifices to resume.[72] These actions may have been a political move to secure the continued backing of the 'pagan' aristocracy or examples of religious toleration. However, it is also possible that Magnentius was simply not a Christian. Amid the uncertainties surrounding Magnentius' religious beliefs, his coins are of particular interest for studying the chi-rho and the tau-rho, both of which appear on his coins.[73] Because Magnentius was a usurper, I do not include the rest of his coin types in

[69] Several of the mints, namely Siscia and Thessalonica, only became Constantius' towards the end of 350 CE, after being under the control of Vetranio for nearly a year. It should also be noted that Magnentius had control of Siscia briefly in September of 351 CE. See Kent (1981), 367, 372 and 413.
[70] Kent (1981), 119. The mint at Amiens was opened in 350 CE.
[71] According to Smith (1976: 82), Magnentius was a 'pagan' who was dedicated to the 'pagan' cause. Cameron (2011: 96) is hesitant to speculate on his religious leanings (1993: 102). Barnes, however, does not believe that Magnentius was a 'pagan.'
[72] Kirsch (2004), 203. See also the *Cod. Theod.*16.10.5. Constantius II repealed the law on nocturnal sacrifices in 353 CE.
[73] Since all of the other usurpers to claim the title of Augustus either did not mint coins or reissued types that had already been in circulation during the reign of earlier emperors, their coins will not otherwise be examined unless noted.

Appendix A unless they were already a type issued by an emperor. As we will see, Magnentius' coins integrate the chi-rho in iconographic designs that are more religious than those found on the coins of Constantine I. I will now examine the coins of the sons of Constantine and those of Magnentius.

5.3.2 The Chi-rho as an Issue Mark

The chi-rho is seldom found as an issue mark on the coins of Constantine's sons, which is a significant switch from how it was used by the mints under their father's authority (refer back to **Figure 5.2**). Between 337 and 340 CE, Lyons – under the authority of Constantine II – used the symbol as an issue mark on a series of GLORIA EXERCITVS bronze coins (Type A103),[74] a continuation of a type that had been initially released under Constantine I's authority.[75] The mint at Lyons, however, had not employed the chi-rho as an issue mark on Constantine's coins.

The chi-rho was a popular motif on the coins of Constans – as we shall see shortly – but it was not often employed as an issue mark at the mints under his authority. Nevertheless, it is still found as an issue mark on three bronze types: two from Aquileia and one from Siscia. Minted at Aquileia sometime after 340 CE, the symbol appears on the same GLORIA EXERCITVS type issued during Constantine II's reign at Lyons (see the previous paragraph, Type A103).[76] The second type from Aquileia was issued between 348 and 350 CE with the reverse legend FEL TEMP REPARATIO. It features a soldier spearing a fallen horseman (Type B22).[77] The issue mark continued to be used on this type from 352 to 355 CE after the mint had fallen under

[74] *RIC VIII* Lyons 4-11. Some variants of this type also feature a chi-rho on the standard between the two soldiers. Therefore, the coins can contain the symbol both as a part of the *labarum* and as an issue mark.
[75] This type was released by most of Constantine's mints, but only the mint at Arles employed the chi-rho as an issue mark (see Ch.5, fn. 46). The mints at Arles and Lyons were in close proximity to each other, so the issue mark from the one may have influenced the other.
[76] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 33 and 34.
[77] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 115 and 116.

Constantius II's authority (see **Figure 5.10**).[78] Finally, the chi-rho appears as an issue mark on VICTORIA AVGG coins from Siscia, minted in 347 CE (Type A42),[79] which is the same type to feature a tau-rho as an issue mark on the coins of Constantine I from Antioch.

Figure 5.10 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted at Aquileia (*RIC VIII* Aquileia 195; Type B22). The reverse features a soldier who is spearing a fallen horseman. A chi-rho appears in the field between the two men. 352 – 355 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1944.100.20482)

During the reigns of the sons of Constantine I, the chi-rho was employed as an issue mark relatively infrequently and only by three Western mints (Lyons, Aquileia and Siscia). It was only used on one type under Constantius II – when he took control of the mint at Aquileia – and never by his own Eastern mints. Its continued appearance as an issue mark on these bronze coins types indicates that a more significant portion of the (Western) Roman population would have encountered the symbol. I will now examine the chi-rho's placement within the coins' main iconographic design to see if this modified its message or intended audience.

5.3.3 The Chi-rho as a Main Design Element

When the chi-rho appears as a part of a coin's main iconographic design, it is usually a part of the *labarum.* It appears in this function on two types of Constantine II's coins. The first instance

[78] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 195 and 196.
[79] *RIC VIII* Siscia 176-178, 180 and 181.

Figure 5.11 *Siliqua* of Constantius II minted in Trier (*RIC VIII* Trier 31; Type D1). The reverse depicts the emperor holding a *labarum*. 337 – 340 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. B.804).

is on the GLORIA EXERCITVS bronzes from Lyons (Type A103) mentioned previously. The choice to use the *labarum* on Lyons' coins must have been made at the level of the mint since the *vexillum* struck on the same type from Trier and Arles does not have a chi-rho. It is a different type from Trier that features a *labarum*. The PAX AVGVSTORVM single silver *siliqua* type, minted between 337 and 340 CE, depicts the emperor holding a *labarum* (see **Figure 5.11**; Type D1).[80] The reverse legend not only suggests that the emperors are the bringers of peace and stability despite the division of the empire, but the *labarum* implies that they bring this peace because they are members of the Constantinian dynasty that have been given their authority by God. This type harkens back to the CONSTANTINVS AVG silver type (Type A73), also minted at Trier, that was issued under Constantine I during the last year of his reign. It continued to be minted on both *siliquae* and heavy *miliarenses* when Constans took over the mint.[81] At Trier during this period, this coin type was consistently issued on silver coins and minted in the names of all three co-emperors.

The *labarum* is also a popular motif on Constans' coins. It is present on coins issued from all of his mints, and it appears on coins minted throughout his reign. Between 337 and 340 CE,

[80] *RIC VIII* Trier 30-32.
[81] *RIC VIII* Trier 161-163 and 170-174. The *siliquae* were minted between 342-343 CE and in 347 CE, and the heavy *miliarenses* were minted between 347-348 CE. Despite the similarity in design, the legend for the heavier silver type is VIRTVS DD NN AVGG and not PAX AVGVSTORVM.

the mint at Aquileia issued the VIRTVS CONSTANTI (*sic*) AVG type on gold multiples (Type A73), which is a variant of the type issued at the end of Constantine I's reign in Trier. These gold multiples feature the emperor, who holds a *labarum* and sceptre, and a captive, who wears a pointed cap and raises his right arm in supplication.[82] A minor variant of this type depicts a similar scene; only this time, the captive is bare-headed and bound with his hands tied behind his back.[83] The military connotation of these gold multiples, especially with the presence of the captives, is clear.

The same type continued to be minted, from 340 to 350 CE, on silver multiples at both Aquileia and Siscia.[84] These silver multiples do not feature captives in their iconography. Instead, the legend TRIVMFATOR GENTIVUM BARBARARVM proclaims that the emperor is a triumphant conqueror. After control of the mint had passed to Constantius II, Siscia continued to produce the type on bronzes with the legend GLORIA ROMANORVM.[85] The semiotic connection between the *labarum*, military might, and the Constantinian dynasty – especially on silver coins that would have been used to pay the troops – remained an iconographic design element on the coins into the middle of the fourth century.

Another type, found on a series of gold multiples from Aquileia minted at the start of Constans' reign, also depicts the emperor holding a *labarum* and a sceptre (Type B11). Instead of captives, however, Victory stands to the emperor's right. She holds a palm branch and crowns the emperor with a wreath.[86] A similar design – with the emperor holding a spear instead of a

[82] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 2.
[83] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 3. The variant is still on a gold multiple from Aquileia, but with the legend VIRTVS CONSTANTIS AVG.
[84] Sometimes the emperor holds a spear instead of a sceptre. See *RIC VIII* Aquileia 48 for spear and 49 for sceptre. The coins from Siscia only feature the spear (*RIC VIII* Siscia 146-148).
[85] *RIC VIII* Siscia 260. These coins were minted in 350 CE.
[86] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 1 and 1a. The legend is GAVDIVM POPVLI ROMANI. These multiples might date instead to later than 340 CE (see Kent 1981: 306).

sceptre – was minted on *solidi* at Siscia between 337 and 340 CE.[87] Another minor variation of the type, issued on gold multiples at Thessalonica and Trier, features the emperor with his foot on a prow.[88] This example is the first secure instance of a specific type being issued from more than a couple of mints, which indicates an iconographic program that a central official circulated to be struck on the coins from various parts of the empire.

This type remained popular and continued to be minted on *solidi* in Siscia under Constantius II.[89] Thessalonica also issued a variant of the type on solidi, with the legend HOC SIGNO VICTOR ERIS.[90] The design continued to be produced on bronze coins in Siscia until 355 CE (see **Figure 5.12**) and began to be minted on bronze coins at Sirmium between 351 and 355 CE.[91] The legend on these coins, HOC SIGNO VICTOR ERIS, is reminiscent of Constantine I's vision, when – as we saw in Chapter 4 – God told the emperor: 'With this Sign, you will be Conqueror.' The military significance of the chi-rho and its connection to the Constantinian

Figure 5.12 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted in Siscia (*RIC VIII* Siscia 304; Type B11). The reverse depicts the emperor who is holding a *labarum* and being crowned by Victory. 350 – 351 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. B.3660).

[87] *RIC VIII* Siscia 9-11. The legend is SPES REPVBLICAE.
[88] *RIC VIII* Thessalonica 61; and Trier 121. The legend is TRIVMFATOR GENTIVM BARBARARVM. They were minted in Thessalonica between 340 and 350 CE. It was only issued between 342 and 343 CE at Trier.
[89] *RIC VIII* Siscia 260. The reverse legend was changed to SALVATOR REI PVBLICAE, proclaiming Constantius II the saviour of the republic.
[90] *RIC VIII* Thessalonica 146. This variant does not feature the emperor holding a spear.
[91] *RIC VIII* Siscia 272, 275, 278, 279, 282, 283, 286-288, 291, 292, 304-306, 309, 311 and 312. There was a brief time when this coin type was not minted in Siscia (in 351 CE, when Magnentius had control of the mint). A similar type, without Victory, was also produced in Siscia (see *RIC VIII* Siscia 355, 356 and 386-389). The legend is GLORIA ROMANORVM. For the coins of Sirmium, see *RIC VIII* Sirmium 23, 24, 30 and 31.

dynasty – in particular Constantine I's vision before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge – is especially highlighted on these coins.

At the start of Constans' reign, the *labarum* is also found on GLORIA EXERCITVS bronze coins at Siscia (Type A103).[92] The mint had issued a similar type under Constantine I from 335 to 337 CE, except it did not feature a chi-rho on the standard.[93] As we have already seen, the *labarum* was featured on coins from Lyons under Constantine II's authority around the same time. The addition of the chi-rho to the standard on the coins from Siscia, minted after Constantine I's death, is intriguing. By this point in time, I contend that the *labarum* was beginning to become the customary way to depict the *vexillum* in art.

Between 340 and 350 CE, chi-rhos were featured in the iconography of several obverse types. When the symbol was first used on the obverses of Constantine's coins, it was placed on the emperor's helmet. Now, on the coins of his sons, the symbol is also found on the obverses of two gold multiple types from Siscia, but in different locations. The reverse type of the first depicts two genii holding a wreath inscribed with VOTIS / XX / MVLTIS / XXX (20 years fulfilled, multiplied to 30), a twentieth-anniversary *vota* for Constantius II (Type C2).[94] The chi-rho can be found on the emperor's cuirass on the coin's obverse. On the second type, the reverse has Constantine II and Constans, both wearing consular robes and holding short sceptres, with a chi-rho engraved above them (Type C7).[95] This example is the first time a chi-rho is present on both the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Significantly, it is also one of the few times that the chi-rho is not set in a securely military context. Nevertheless, I believe the association between the symbol and the Constantinian dynasty is even more explicit, linking the glory of the

[92] *RIC VIII* Siscia 85-87, 88, 89-104.
[93] See *RIC VII* Siscia 252-256.
[94] *RIC VIII* Siscia 105. The legend is GAVDIVM POPVLI ROMANI. Constantius II is on the obverse.
[95] *RIC VIII* Siscia 106. The legend is GLORIA REIPVBLICAE. Constans is on the obverse.

republic to the administration of the Empire under Constantine's two sons and connecting the symbol to both Constans and Constantius II – and the glory of the Constantinian dynasty – by appearing between them.

In Aquileia, from 347 to 348 CE, two new iconographic types began to appear on bronze coins. The first features the emperor on a ship's galley holding a *labarum* and phoenix on a globe. Victory sits on the stern, steering the ship (Type B16).[96] This design – and a minor variant with Victory on the globe, rather than a phoenix – continued to be minted from 348 to 350 CE at Rome, Trier, Lyons, Arles, Siscia, and Thessalonica.[97] Both versions were also produced during the reign of Constantius II from 348 until 355 CE.[98] This type was the first to be minted under his authority in the East. It had taken nearly a decade before the chi-rho began to appear on his coins, even though his brothers had used the symbol since the start of their reigns.

The second bronze type minted in Aquileia in 347 CE depicts the emperor holding a *labarum* in one hand and resting his other on a shield, with two bound captives (Type A95).[99] A similar design, but without the captives, appears on coins minted at Siscia.[100] This type without the captives had been issued earlier (starting in 340 CE) on heavy silver *miliarenses* at Lyons when Constans first took over the mint from Constantine II.[101] Once again, Constantius II's

[96] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 97-99, 108 and 109. The legend is FEL TEMP REPARATIO.
[97] *RIC VIII* Rome 107-117, 118, 119-135 and 148-152; Trier 212-217, 239 and 240; Lyons 69-78; Arles 99-101; Siscia 197-209, 229, 230, 233, 234, 237-239, 243-246, 248 and 250; and Thessalonica 107-113 and 119-122. For the 'Victory on a globe' variant, see *RIC VIII* Trier 218, 219, 219a and 241-244; Lyons 104-106; Arles 125-128; and Siscia 251, 252, 255 and 256.
[98] The 'phoenix on a globe' variant was issued between 348 and 355 CE at Heraclea, Constantinople, Nicomedia, Cyzicus, Antioch and Alexandria (see *RIC VIII* Heraclea 62, 66 and 68; Constantinople 80 and 83; Nicomedia 64; Cyzicus 66 and 68; Antioch 121 and 124; and Alexandria 45 and 50-53). The legend on all of these coins continued to be FEL TEMP REPARATIO. The type continued to be issued from 351 to 355 CE at Siscia and from 350 to 355 CE at Thessalonica when Constantius II took over the mints after his brother's death (see *RIC VIII* Siscia 327, 328, 329, 330 and 331; and Thessalonica 165, 168-170, 174 and 175). The minor variant with 'Victory on a globe' was used again at Rome from 352 to 355 CE (see *RIC VIII* Rome 250).
[99] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 107. The legend is also FEL TEMP REPARATIO.
[100] *RIC VIII* Siscia 223-226.
[101] See *RIC VIII* Lyons 33. The legend is VIRTVS DD NN AVGG.

mints borrowed the type (nearly a decade later), both with and without the captives present. The iconography was disseminated on heavy *miliarenses* and bronze coins at Thessalonica and bronze coins at Heraclea, Cyzicus, Constantinople, and Nicomedia.[102] The mints of Constantius II appropriated the iconography of this type, as well as the 'emperor, on a galley, holding phoenix (or Victory) on a globe and *labarum*' type (Type B16). While the Western mints continued to release types that had been in use under Constans' authority even after his death, the Eastern mints did not produce the same type of imagery. At Constantinople, the city founded by Constantine I, the chi-rho is absent from the coins for the first decade of Constantius II's control.[103] Whereas the mints under Constans seemed to have had much more independence when it came to what imagery was placed on the *vexillum* – and thus allowing particular mints to choose the chi-rho if they so wanted – this was not the case for the Eastern mints, which seemed to be under a stricter central authority (perhaps even Constantius II himself) that did not want the symbol on the coins.

Until 348 CE, when the 'emperor, on a galley, holding phoenix (or Victory) on a globe and *labarum*' type (Type B16) was first introduced, none of the coins issued from Rome had been struck with a chi-rho. This type was the first time that the symbol appeared on coins from the mint closest to where the Battle of the Milvian Bridge took place. It took over a generation before the symbol was finally included on coins produced in Rome. Despite the mint's late adoption of the symbol, one of the most important types to feature a chi-rho is the (extremely

[102] The legend is VIRTVS EXERCITVM for the coins minted in 350 CE from Thessalonica (see *RIC VIII* Thessalonica 125-127 and 138). The legend is FEL TEMP REPARATIO for the bronzes minted between 348 and 350 CE at Heraclea, Cyzicus, Constantinople, and Nicomedia (see *RIC VIII* Heraclea 63, 69, 72 and 75; Cyzicus 70, 71, 75, 76, 80 and 83; Constantinople 84, 87 and 89; and Nicomedia 67, 68 and 71). Heraclea is the only mint where Kent does not specify whether the banner has a chi-rho or cross when describing the coins. The coins for Cyzicus all have chi-rhos on them. A slight variation of this type portrays the captives as kneeling, rather than standing, as they are on the coins of the West.

[103] See *RIC VIII* Constantinople 1-77.

rare) silver *miliarenses* from Rome. Minted sometime between 348 and 350 CE, before the death of Constans, this type depicts four standards (Type A101). The two standards in the middle are inscribed with alpha and omega. A chi-rho appears above and between them.[104] This coin type neither appears on coins from any other mints nor is it used again in Rome. In addition, there is only one surviving example of this coin, which could indicate that its design was the choice of a mint authority in Rome.[105] However, some of the iconography used on this type does appear on other coins: those of the usurper Magnentius. Since he was the commander of the imperial guard (see below), he may have encountered this type directly (perhaps even as a donative or commemorative piece). Magnentius' coins will now be discussed in further detail.

When the usurper Magnentius rose to power, he took control of the mints Constans had possessed, even opening a new mint at Amiens in the middle of 350 CE.[106] Several types issued under his authority depict him holding a *labarum* and were continuations of types that had already been minted under Constans.[107] Although it is not surprising that the mints continued their day-to-day operations and issued some of the designs used under the authority of the previous emperor, Magnentius must have approved of these images. As a usurper, he would hardly have sanctioned imagery that his political adversary had used without reason.

The mints under Magnentius' authority also began to utilize new iconographic designs, several of which separate the chi-rho from the *labarum*. One example is the gold *solidi* from

[104] *RIC VIII* Rome 71. The legend is VIRTVS EXERCITVM.
[105] Because of the extreme rarity of this silver coin, an image could not be found.
[106] Kent (1981), 119.
[107] For example, the 'emperor, on a galley, holding phoenix (or Victory) on globe and *labarum*' type (Type B16); the 'standard flanked by captives' type (Type A100); and the 'emperor holding *labarum* and sceptre (or spear)' type (Type A73). See *RIC VIII* Trier 260-268; Lyons 109-114; Rome 186-190; Aquileia 124, 141 and 149; and Siscia 318-319. The legends vary, including: FELICITAS REI PVBLICE; RESITITVTOR LIBERTATIS; VICTORIA AVG ET CAES AND GLORIA ROMANORVM. Variations of the types (*RIC VIII* Aquileia 148; and Siscia 318-319) have Magnentius placing his foot on a captive. All coins are bronze except the gold multiples (*RIC VIII* 141) and *solidi* (*RIC VIII* Aquileia 124 and 148) from Aquileia.

Rome that depict a chi-rho on a globe. Roma, who is seated on a throne, holds the globe.[108] The chi-rho is integrated into a scene with a non-Christian personification on these solidi. We have already seen several examples of this above, such as the *labarum* used in the same scenes as Victory.

Another example is the type (Type A34) issued during the reign of Constans that depicts two Victories holding a wreath inscribed with a *votum.* On Magnentius' coins, a chi-rho surmounts the wreath, a coin type that was also later used by Constantius II's mints (see below).[109] These examples illustrate that the combination of the chi-rho with particular personifications from the old Roman religion was not problematic. As I mentioned in the last Chapter – and as will be discussed further in future Chapters – the fourth century was a period of religious negotiation. These personifications were the conventional way of depicting concepts such as Victory or cities such as Rome and Constantinople, and it would not have been problematic to combine the chi-rho with these images, even if it held Christian connotations to some viewing the coins.

Several new types featuring Magnentius holding a *labarum* were issued under his authority. A bronze type from Rome proclaims that Magnentius is the 'triumphant Augustus, liberator of the Romans' (VICTORIA AVG. LIB. ROMANOR.). It depicts the usurper holding an olive branch in one hand and a *labarum* in the other, next to a kneeling captive.[110] A gold multiple type from Aquileia has the usurper holding a *labarum* and placing his hand on the head of a kneeling captive.[111] These types all feature the usurper holding a *labarum* amongst a captive.

---

[108] *RIC VIII* Rome 166-167.
[109] This type is found on bronze coins from several mints, including Trier, Arles, Lyons, Rome, and Aquileia. See *RIC VIII* Trier 315 and 316; Lyons 145-150; Arles 183-187; Rome 222, 223, 224 and 225; and Aquileia 175 and 176. The legend is VICTORIAE DD NN AVG ET CAES.
[110] *RIC VIII* Rome 193.
[111] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 130. The legend is VIRTVS AVGVSTI NOSTRI.

Along with the reverse legends, these coins suggest that Magnentius is the liberator of the Roman people. The message found on these coins, although diverse in iconography and legend, is similar to the message propagated by the Constantinian dynasty: the ruling emperor is the one who brings peace and stability to the empire under the auspices and authority of the Christian God.

Towards the end of his usurpation, Magnentius tried to stake his claim as Constantine I's legitimate successor by issuing a coin with the reverse legend SALVS DD NN AVG ET CAES.

Figure 5.13 Bronze coin of Magnentius minted in Trier (*RIC VIII* Trier 319; Type B24). The reverse has a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and an omega. 352 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (nos. B.932 and B.934).

.e bronze coin, which was uck at Amiens, Trier, Arles, d Lyons – but not, :erestingly, at Rome – picts a large chi-rho flanked ' an alpha and omega (see **Figure 5.13**; Type B24).[112] Burnett claims that this was done in order to stress his Christianity.[113] Garipzanov adds that the alpha and omega were included to contrast his orthodox beliefs against the Arianism practiced by Constantius II.[114] If these suppositions are true, it is ironic that the usurper who deposed and killed Constans only to reopen temples and allow the resumption of nocturnal sacrifices issued a large number of bronze coins with images of a chi-rho. Moreover, as we have seen, the alpha and omega would have

[112] See *RIC VIII* Amiens 34-45; Trier 318, 319, 320-327A; Arles 188-191, 192, 193-202; Lyons 153-176.
[113] Burnett (1987), 145.
[114] Garipzanov (2018), 68.

contextualized the symbol as Christian, as they are a direct reference to Jesus as the beginning and the end (*Revelation* 22:13).

According to Burnett, Magnentius used the chi-rho on his bronze coins because he wished to stress his Christianity to the most people and thus smooth over his usurpation of the Western Empire.[115] Kent, too, considers Magnentius' later coins as a proclamation that Christ is his saviour.[116] While these hypotheses are plausible, considering Magnentius minted more types, including their minor variants, with the chi-rho than had any of the sons of Constantine I, it does not necessarily mean that Magnentius was a Christian. For instance, this design is similar to the silver *miliarenses* – with a standard featuring a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega – previously minted under Constans. As I mentioned above, as the commander of the elite *Ioviani et Herculiani* guard under Constans,[117] Magnentius might have even received this silver issue. It is plausible that Magnentius saw the coin and appropriated the iconography to make his transition into emperor smoother, as he had done with some of the types that feature the *labara*. Rather than being a symbol of his faith, the chi-rho might have been a propagandistic tool to align himself with the house of Constantine I.

When Constantius II became sole emperor after his defeat of Magnentius, several types that had been issued under the authority of the usurper continued to be minted, such as: the 'emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe' type (Type A70);[118] the 'Victories holding wreath (or shield) with *votum*' type (see **Figure 5.14**; Type A34);[119] and, most significantly, the

[115] See Burnett (1987), 145.
[116] Kent (1981), 12.
[117] For a summary of Magnentius' military career, see Hebblewhite (2017: 19). The *Iuliani et Herculiani* were palatine legions created under Diocletian (see Harries 2012: 57).
[118] It is found on bronze coins that were produced in Thessalonica from 350 to 355 (see *RIC VIII* Thessalonica 172, 173, 178 and 179). Under Constantius II, it has the reverse legend FEL TEMP REPARATIO. Like the variant of the type from Aquileia, the emperor spurns a seated captive with his foot.
[119] On these bronze coins from Rome, the Victories hold a wreath inscribed with a *votum* (either VOT / XXX or VOT / V / MVLT / X). See *RIC VIII* Rome 251-253.

Figure 5.14 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted at Rome (*RIC VIII* Rome 251; Type A34). The reverse depicts two Victories holding a shield, inscribed with *vota,* between them. A chi-rho appears above the shield. 352 – 355 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1944.100.23889)

'chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega' type (Type B24).[120] The latter bronze coins from Trier have the reverse legend SALVS AVG NOSTRI, 'health for our Augustus.' Kent stresses the link between these coins and the previous issue from Trier minted under the authority of Magnentius.[121] The fact that the other mints under Constantius II's authority did not release these coins might suggest that the continuation of the issue was decided at the level of the mint. Nevertheless, this coin type was not simply a repeat of the design disseminated under Magnentius. The reverse legend was changed from SALVS DD NN AVG ET CAES, the health of the Emperor and Caesar, to SALVS AVG NOSTRI, the health of *our* emperor. The addition of this possessive adjective implies that Constantius II is the rightful ruler, as decreed by the Roman people (and God). The alteration of the reverse legend indicates that coin types were not simply carried over by mints when the authority changed without some level of consideration.

Constantius II only issued three types of coins with the chi-rho that had not first been issued either by his brother Constans or by the usurper Magnentius. One type that began to appear on bronze coins at Siscia and Thessalonica in 350 CE depicts the emperor holding a

[120] *RIC VIII* Trier 332-337.
[121] Kent (1981), 136.

Figure 5.15 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted at Thessalonica (*RIC VIII* Thessalonica 132; Type B13). The reverse depicts a soldier holding two *labara.* 350 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1984.146.907)

Figure 5.16 Bronze coin of Constantius II minted at Aquileia (*RIC VIII* Aquileia 186; Type B12). The reverse depicts the emperor, who is holding a *labarum* and raising a turreted female. 352 – 355 CE.
With permission of wildwinds.com, ex CNG auction, May 2010

labarum in each hand (see **Figure 5.15**; Type B13).[122] It was also issued on bronzes in Sirmium from 351 to 355 CE.[123] A second type, minted at Aquileia, depicts the emperor holding a *labarum* and raising a kneeling turreted figure (see **Figure 5.16**; Type B12).[124] Once again, and like most of the imagery discussed thus far, these coin types place the chi-rho firmly in a military context, especially as the symbol is a part of the *labarum*.

[122] *RIC VIII* Siscia 270, 271, 273, 274, 276, 277, 280, 281, 284, 285, 289, 290, 293 and 294; and Thessalonica 130-132 and 135. The legend is CONCORDIA MILITVM (the agreement of the army). These bronze coins continued to be minted in Siscia and Thessalonica until 355 CE (see *RIC VIII* Siscia 301-303, 307, 308, 310 and 347a; and Thessalonica 167). Production was interrupted 351 CE when Magnentius controlled the mint.
[123] *RIC VIII* Sirmium 21, 22, 28, 29, 33 and 34.
[124] *RIC VIII* Aquileia 186. The legend is GLORIA ROMANORVM.

More importantly, however, are the chi-rhos that were minted on silver multiples from Rome between 352 and 355 CE. The obverse depicts the emperor, wearing a helmet, with a spear over his shoulder and a shield on his left arm. The shield is decorated with a chi-rho.[125] This obverse design also appears on *solidi* from Trier (see **Figure 5.17**; Type B6).[126] Although the chi-rho had been used on the obverse of coins before, such as on the helmet of Constantine I or the cuirass of Constans, this is the first time that the chi-rho appears on a shield. This imagery is all the more significant as it is on the shields of his soldiers that Constantine I purportedly placed the sign to defeat Maxentius before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.

Figure 5.17 *Solidus* of Constantius II minted in Trier (*RIC VIII* Trier 344; Type B6). The obverse features the emperor holding a spear and a shield. A chi-rho appears on the shield. 353 – 355 CE.
©Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin (no. 18200306)

In conclusion, the *labarum* was a fundamental method for disseminating the chi-rho on coins. Standards without chi-rhos could still be found on the coins of Constantine I's sons,[127] but they were slowly being replaced with *labara*. The chi-rho is employed as a symbol throughout Constans' reign and is found on coins struck at every mint under his authority. It is, therefore, a principal design element on his coins. Significantly, under all three emperors, most of the chi-

[125] *RIC VIII* Rome 232. The reverse legend is GLORIA REIPVBLICAE.
[126] *RIC VIII* Trier 338, 341 and 344.
[127] Some examples include *RIC VIII* Trier 4 and 112; Lyons 14; Arles 14 and 44; Rome 52; Aquileia 26; Thessalonica 56 and 81; Heraclea 23; Constantinople 24 and 90; Nicomedia 8; Cyzicus 14; Antioch 46 and 125; and Alexandria 62.

rhos appear as a part of the coin's iconographic design (usually in connection with the *labarum*) rather than as a part of the issue mark. This usage is the reverse of the trend found on the coins of their father (refer back to **Figure 5.2**).

Since the chi-rho is found on gold, silver, and bronze coins,[128] neither the sons of Constantine nor the usurper Magnentius were targeting specific sections of the population with their imagery. Instead, various strata of the Roman population would have encountered their propagandistic message, which I believe was intended to convey dynastic continuity. Even the bronze coins with the most apparent Christian message – those containing the image of the chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega – would have had widespread viewership. In light of the way the chi-rho had been used on past bronze coins, it is more likely that the symbol would have been read as "Constantinian" rather than – or in addition to – "Christian." It is also worth noting that all of the designs with the *labara* show the emperor holding the chi-rho as a symbol of military conquest and victory.[129] This use of the symbol does not deviate from how Constantine I first applied it before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, as mentioned in the fourth-century written sources (see Chapter 4).

5.3.4 The Tau-rho as an Issue Mark

The tau-rho was employed relatively infrequently as an issue mark during the reigns of the sons of Constantine I. It first appears on bronze coins from Lyons under the authority of Constantine II that feature the emperor holding a globe and spear (Type A70).[130] Since the tau-rho was not used under the authority of Constans, it next appears as an issue mark under Constantius II. Unlike his brothers, Constantius II's mints did not include either this symbol or the chi-rho on

[128] This is apparent by looking at the coins from Trier alone, where the image of the chi-rho on the banner is found on gold, silver, and bronze coins.
[129] Indeed, on all of the coins featuring the emperor holding a *labarum*, the emperor is in military dress.
[130] *RIC VIII* Lyons 1-3. These coins were minted between 337 and 340 CE. The legend is AETERNA PIETAS.

Figure 5.18 *Solidus* of Constantius II minted in Thessalonica (*RIC VIII* Thessalonica 152; Type B6). The reverse features the abbreviated mint name flanked on either side by a tau-rho (☩TES☩). 350 – 355 CE.
© Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Bequest of Thomas Whittemore (no. 1951.31.4.15)

his coins at the start of his reign. The tau-rho did not appear again on coins until 350 CE, when it was placed on *solidi* from Thessalonica (see **Figure 5.18**; Type B6). This type depicts Roma and Constantinopolis, holding a spear and a sceptre, respectively. The personifications are sitting on thrones, and together they are supporting a wreath inscribed with a *votum*.[131] The tau-rho is connected directly to the mint on these coins, appearing on either side of the mint's name (☩TESP). These are the only two types in which the tau-rho is used as an issue mark during this period. However, despite the scarcity of different types with the symbol, it is found on bronze coins, so it is difficult to determine how widespread the viewership of the symbol would have been.

5.3.5 The Tau-rho as a Main Design Element

Tau-rhos are only used as a part of the iconographic design on two coin types; both issued under the usurper Magnentius. One type of bronze coin from Lyons, the 'emperor, on a galley, holding phoenix (or Victory) on a globe and *labarum*' type (Type B16) mentioned above, has a standard with a tau-rho on a banner.[132] When released from other mints, such as Trier, this FEL TEMP REPARATIO series of coins typically have a chi-rho on the standard.[133] On bronze coins from

[131] *RIC VIII* Thessalonica 152. Constantinopolis' foot is on a prow. The reverse legend is GLORIA REI PVBLICAE.
[132] *RIC VIII* Lyons 108. It has a rarity of 'r'.
[133] see Ch.5, fn. 97.

Amiens, the second type features Victories holding a shield surmounted by a tau-rho (see **Figure 5.19**; Type A34).[134] These coins are also the same as a series minted with chi-rhos (see above). Since many of these coins with the chi-rho variant survive from other mints, using the tau-rho instead of the chi-rho would have been a choice made at the individual mints. Magnentius was the first ruler to incorporate the tau-rho symbol – which, as we have seen in previous Chapters, had been in use as a Christian symbol for centuries before the fourth century– as a part of the iconographic design of his coins. I suggest that by using both symbols on his coins in this way, Magnentius was not only highlighting his link to the Constantinian dynasty (through the chi-rho) but was also indicating his acceptance – whether because he was a devotee or not – of Christianity (through the tau-rho).

Figure 5.19 Bronze coin of Magnentius minted at Amiens (*RIC VIII* Amiens 23). The reverse depicts two Victories holding a shield, inscribed with *vota,* between them. A tau-rho appears above the shield. 350 – 353 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1989.11.55)

[134] *RIC VIII* Amiens 20-22, 23, 24-33. The legend is VICTORIAE DD NN AVG ET CAE.

5.4 JULIAN THE APOSTATE (361-362)

After a decade of Constantius II ruling as sole emperor, the empire once again underwent a change of regime when Julian – also called Julian the Apostate – was proclaimed emperor by his troops in 361 CE. Julian, a cousin of Constantius II, was still a member of Constantine I's family, so this was not a switch in dynasties. It was, however, a change in religious policies as Julian, who favoured the traditional Roman religion, was both intellectually and ethically against Christianity and worked actively against it. According to Smith, Julian saw Christianity as both man-made and false since Christian belief in the divinity of Jesus made them reject the good parts of both Judaism and the traditional Greek religion.[135] Smith concludes that Christianity was invariably linked with members of his own family, such as Constantius II, who may have been responsible for killing most of his family and keeping Julian in exile for most of his youth.[136] When one considers Julian's experiences at the hands of his Christian predecessors, it is no wonder that he was staunchly against Christianity and employed anti-Christian measures.[137] We ought to remember this history when considering the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho, if any, on his coins.

Traditional Roman religious iconography is unexpectedly scarce on the coins minted under Julian's authority. Although coins were minted at Aquileia, Heraclea, Constantinople, Nicomedia, Cyzicus, and Alexandria, none of them released coins with images of deities or personifications.[138] Furthermore, even those mints that did issue coins with "religious" images did not revert back to the types of divine iconography – such as Apollo, Minerva, and Ceres –

[135] Smith (1995), 192.
[136] Smith (1995), 210.
[137] For a summary of Julian's anti-Christian measures, see: Kahlos (2009), 75-79; Smith (1995), 207-218; and Ullucci (2012), 139-141. Teitler (2017: 25-29 and 65-70) presents the case that Julian did not treat Christians especially harshly but rather wanted to teach them about their folly in believing in Christianity.
[138] It should be noted, however, that several of these cities had only a few different types of coins issued from them.

that had been used by previous 'pagan' emperors or even the images – such as Sol or Mars – that Constantine I's mints had disseminated on his coins at the start of his reign.[139] Instead, his coins feature personifications,[140] such as Roma and Victory, imagery commonly used by earlier emperors, including Constantine I and his sons. In other words, it is the abstraction of deities that remains on coins: the personification of Victory is how one depicts military triumph, and so her image can be used by Christians and non-Christians alike.

Figure 5.20 Bronze coin of Julian minted in Cyzicus (*RIC VIII* Cyzicus 126; Type E1). The reverse depicts a bull, above which are two stars. 361 – 363 CE. © The Trustees of the British Museum (no. B.5280)

One coin type issued under the authority of Julian that has been noted for its 'pagan' religious iconography is a series of bronzes that have the image of a bull and two stars on the reverse (see **Figure 5.20**; Type E1).[141] As I have mentioned above (see, especially, Ch. 5, fn.16), the exact meaning behind this imagery is uncertain, although the people of Antioch believed it

[139] Roman gods and goddesses appear on imperial coins from the time of Augustus. For some examples, see: *RIC I* 170, for Apollo on an *aureus* of Augustus; *RIC III* 2, for Minerva on a *denarius* of Antoninus Pius; and *RIC II* 416, for Ceres on an *aureus* of Hadrian.

[140] The actions of personifications are more predictable than the gods. Personifications, such as Victory and Pietas, were connected with the military and used to spread messages of imperial propaganda. See Bendlin's article 'Personification' in Brill's New Pauly. According to Cameron (2011: 342), Victory lacked myths surrounding her and was, therefore, a personification rather than a wholly developed goddess. According to Grierson and Mays (1992: 81), Victory was able to survive on coins when the empire became Christian because she was a personification that later underwent "a final transformation into a Christian angel." For information on Victory on coins, see Grierson & Mays (1992), 81-82.

[141] See *RIC VIII* Arles 313-317; Aquileia 242 and 243; Siscia 411-413; Sirmium 105-107; Thessalonica 222-226; Heraclea 101-104; Constantinople 161, 162, 163 and 164; Nicomedia 118-122; Cyzicus 125-128; and Antioch 216-218. The legend is SECURITAS REI PUB.

demonstrated Julian's love of sacrifices. In addition to this type, several eagles minted on the coins of Arles may have also held some religious symbolism.[142] These were the only two types minted under Julian's, albeit short, reign that might allude to the traditional Roman, or rather non-Christian, religion.

Julian's mints did not return to the pre-Constantinian practice of striking the Roman gods and goddesses on their coins. Rather, his coinage continued to feature military iconography, such as *vota*, soldiers, and Victory: images that had been commonly issued on coins over the last thirty years under the first Christian emperors. Under his authority, the new bull type was released on bronze coins. Whatever its specific intended message, it was a significant representation of non-Christian religious iconography, and, as we have seen, we have evidence from the ancient sources that this is how some interpreted it.

Furthermore, no chi-rho or tau-rho symbols can be found on Julian's coins, except for one scarce type. A bronze medallion from Lyons features a trophy flanked by captives (Type A100). On the obverse, Julian appears holding a shield engraved with a chi-rho.[143] Since the medallion is unique, Kent speculates on its authenticity.[144] This type had not been minted in Lyons since Constantine I, under whose authority it was not issued with a chi-rho. The uniqueness of this medallion, along with the fact that neither the type nor the reverse legend was used by any other mint during the reign of Julian, suggests that it should not be given too much influence over the lack of the use of the symbols in every other respect.

Julian had removed both the cross and the chi-rho from the imperial standard during his brief reign.[145] In light of this, it is no surprise that – with the one exception mentioned in the

[142] Kent (1981), 45. See *RIC VIII* Arles 305-311.
[143] *RIC VIII* Lyons 204. The legend is REPARATIO GALLIARVM, and this bronze medallion has a rarity of r^5.
[144] Kent (1981), 175. Kent states that if the coin is authentic, it must have been produced very early in Julian's reign.
[145] Kirsch (2004), 247.

previous paragraph – he also removed these images from his coins. The fact that Julian's coins have neither the chi-rho nor the tau-rho could suggest that these symbols were by that time – in the early 360s – recognized as Christian symbols. Julian, however, might have removed the symbols from his coins not because they were Christian symbols but because they were symbols associated with the Constantinian dynasty. In the same way that Magnentius had used the symbols to associate himself with the old regime, Julian removed them to distance himself from them. His animosity towards Constantine I, in particular, is evident in Julian's *The Caesars*, where he mocks both Christianity and Constantine I. Constantine approaches Jesus after Jesus has said, "He that is a seducer, he that is a murderer, he that is sacrilegious and infamous, let him approach without fear! For with this water will I wash him and will straightaway make him clean."[146] Julian is emphasizing that Christians attract murderers and other nefarious people to their religion with the promise that their sins will be washed away. He also alludes to Constantine I's own reprehensible actions – such as killing his wife and son – which would have been absolved by his baptism near the time of his death. I posit that this passage highlights both Julian's aversion to Christianity and the Constantinian dynasty, either of which would have been an impetus for the removal of the chi-rho on his coins. The passage also demonstrates that undermining his own dynastic authority did not daunt Julian. Instead, he wished to separate his rule from the legacy of his family.

[146] *Ὅστις φθορεύς, ὅστις μιαιφόνος, ὅστις ἐναγὴς καὶ βδελυρός, ἴτω θαρρῶν· ἀποφανῶ γὰρ αὐτὸν τουτῳὶ τῷ ὕδατι λούσας αὐτίκα καθαρόν* (Jul. *Caes.* 336-336B). This translation is taken from W. C. Wright (1913).

5.5 The Second Half of the Fourth Century

5.5.1 Historical Background and Division of the Mints

From Constantine I's conversion onwards, all fourth-century emperors – with the sole exception of Julian – supported Christianity.[147] Julian had had control of the empire for three years when he died in 363 CE during an attack against Persia.[148] The chief officer of the guards, Jovian (363-364 CE), was elected emperor after his death.[149] Once again, the empire was under the control of a Christian emperor.[150] Despite the brevity of Jovian's rule, the chi-rho made a return on the imperial coinage, as will be detailed further below. Nevertheless, it was not a particularly prevalent symbol, featuring on only 1 type of the 7 (14.29%) minted during his rule (see **Table 5.5**).

Table 5.5 The various coin types issued under Jovian that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	☧	Main design	Sirmium, Thessalonica	Gold
				Arles	Silver

After Jovian's death in 364 CE, Valentinian I (364-375 CE), a tribune, was chosen as emperor.[151] Valentinian briefly ruled the whole empire alone before he proclaimed his brother, Valens (364-378 CE), the emperor of the East, while retaining control of the Western portion for himself.[152] Thereafter, Valentinian I oversaw the mints at Trier, Lyons, Arles, Milan, Aquileia,

[147] Cameron (1993), 74. It should be noted, however, that persecuting 'paganism' occurred relatively infrequently.
[148] Ammianus Marcellinus, 25.4.26.
[149] Ammianus Marcellinus, 25.5.4.
[150] Kent (1981), 18. Like Constantine I and two of his sons, Jovian was a Christian who supported the Nicene Creed. According to Ammianus Marcellinus (25.10.15), Jovian even studied Christian law.
[151] Ammianus Marcellinus, 26.1.5.
[152] Ammianus Marcellinus, 26.4.3.

Rome, Siscia, Sirmium, and Thessalonica, while his brother had authority over the mints at Heraclea, Constantinople, Cyzicus, Nicomedia, Antioch, and Alexandria. Valentinian I was a Nicene Christian emperor who demonstrated religious toleration during his reign.[153] His coins feature both the chi-rho and tau-rho, with 8 of the 21 types (38.1%) issued under his authority having one symbol or the other (see **Table 5.6**).

Table 5.6 The various coin types issued under Valentinian I that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A42	'Victory holding wreath (or trophy) and palm (or wreath; or trophy)'	☧	Issue mark	Aquileia	Bronze
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	☧	Main design	Arles, Lyons, Milan, Rome, Sirmium, Thessalonica, Trier	Gold
				Aquileia, Arles, Lyons, Siscia, Thessalonica, Trier	Silver
				Arles, Lyons, Rome, Thessalonica	Bronze
A92	'Emperor (or Victory) holding *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive'	☧	Main design	Aquileia, Arles, Lyons, Rome, Sirmium, Siscia, Thessalonica, Trier	Bronze
A95	'Emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or sceptre; or trophy) and shield'	☧	Main design	Aquileia, Siscia, Thessalonica	Bronze
A112	'*votum* in wreath'	☧	Issue mark	Siscia	Silver
G1	'Emperor, holding *labarum* and globe, crowned by Victory'	☧	Main design	Thessalonica	Gold
G2	'Emperor holding *labarum* and Victory on globe'	☧	Main design	Arles, Lyons	Gold
G7	'Emperors holding *labara* and globes'	☧	Main design	Siscia	Silver

Like his brother, Valens was also a Christian, but he – like Constantius II – supported Arianism.[154] Valens was not as tolerant towards the traditional Roman religions as his brother,

[153] Alföldi (1952), 55; Cameron (2011), 34; and Hunt (2007), 71-72.
[154] Lenski (2002), 243. Valens believed that the son was subordinate, not equal, to the Father (see Freeman 2008: 24).

possibly because he had to manage more contentious disputes between opposing religious opinions and organizations as ruler of the Eastern Empire.[155] Despite their different religious policies – towards Christians and non-Christians – both the chi-rho and the tau-rho were used consistently by the brothers and reached the zenith of their use under Valens (refer back to **Figure 5.1**). Of the 22 types issued under his authority, 12 (54.54%) feature one symbol or the other (see **Table 5.7**).

Table 5.7 The various coin types issued under Valens that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A37	'Victory inscribing shield'	�Ꝑ	Issue mark	Antioch, Constantinople	Gold
A42	'Victory holding wreath (or trophy) and palm (or wreath; or trophy)'	�Ꝑ	Issue mark	Constantinople	Gold
A52	'Emperor, on horse, raising hand'	Ꝑ	Issue mark	Antioch	Gold
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	�Ꝑ	Issue mark	Constantinople	Silver
			Main design	Antioch, Constantinople, Cyzicus, Nicomedia	Gold
				Antioch, Nicomedia	Silver
				Nicomedia	Bronze
A92	'Emperor (or Victory) holding *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive'	�Ꝑ	Main design	Alexandria, Constantinople, Cyzicus, Heraclea	Bronze
A95	'Emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or sceptre; or trophy) and shield'	�Ꝑ	Issue mark	Constantinople, Nicomedia	Bronze
			Main design	Constantinople, Nicomedia	Silver
		Ꝑ	Issue mark	Nicomedia	Bronze
A112	'*votum* in wreath'	�Ꝑ	Issue mark	Constantinople	Silver
B3	'Constantinopolis, seated on a throne, holding a sceptre (or spear) and Victory on a globe (or cornucopia)'	�Ꝑ	Issue mark	Antioch	Gold
B6	'Roma and Constantinopolis, seated on thrones, supporting shield (or wreath) with *votum'*	�Ꝑ	Main design	Antioch	Gold
B7	'Victory holding wreath and shield'	�Ꝑ	Issue mark	Constantinople	Silver
H1	'Emperor, seated on throne, holding sceptre and *mappa*'	Ꝑ	Issue mark	Antioch	Gold
G7	'Emperors holding *labara* and globes'	�Ꝑ	Main design	Constantinople	Silver

[155] Downey (1969), 62; and Errington (2006), 189. Lenski (2002: 234) states that while Valentinian I could remain detached from religious controversies, Valens was not afforded the same luxury.

Table 5.8 The various coin types issued under Gratian that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A21	'Roma holding spear (or sceptre) and globe'	☧	Main design	Rome	Bronze
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	☧	Main design	Rome	Silver
A92	'Emperor (or Victory) holding *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive'	☧	Main design	Aquileia, Arles, Lyons, Rome, Siscia, Thessalonica	Bronze
A95	'Emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or sceptre; or trophy) and shield'	☧	Main design	Siscia	Silver
A112	'*votum* in wreath'	☧	Issue mark	Siscia	Silver
B12	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or Victory on globe) and raising kneeling female'	☧	Main design	Aquileia, Trier	Gold

During the reigns of Valentinian I and Valens, we see the beginning of the trend that would continue through the remainder of the history of the Roman Empire. Except for Theodosius I, who was sole emperor, the empire would in future be divided between East and West, with two co-emperors ruling together. When Valentinian I died in November of 375 CE, his son, Gratian (367-383 CE), who had been raised to Augustus in 367 CE at the age of eight, became the emperor of the Western Empire.[156] At this time, his uncle Valens was still the emperor of the East, but, like his father, Gratian was an adherent to Nicene Christianity.[157] In a law issued from Milan in 379 CE, Gratian – along with his co-emperors Valentinian II and Theodosius I – prohibited all Christian heresies.[158] However, despite his apparent Christian devotion and perhaps further evidence that the chi-rho was not exclusively a Christian symbol,

[156] McEvoy (2013), 49; and Pearce (1933), xlii.
[157] Kelly (2009), 29.
[158] *Cod. Theod.* 16.5.5. In other words, he banned all sects of Christianity that were not Nicaean. Gratian was the first emperor to seek the advice of church officials for secular matters (Boyd 1969: 25). In 382 CE, Gratian famously removed the Altar of Victory from the senate in Rome (Kaatz 2012: 123-125). In addition, in 391 CE, Gratian issued a decree banning sacrifices (see *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.11).

only 5 of his 17 coin types (29.41%) feature a chi-rho, which is a fascinating decline in the use of the symbol, especially since he ruled for a longer period than both his father and uncle (see **Table 5.8**).

Valentinian II (375-392 CE), the younger son of Valentinian I and half-brother of Gratian, had been proclaimed emperor after his father's death by a few military commanders, without Gratian's consultation.[159] Since Valentinian II was four at the time, he was emperor in name only. Gratian was the senior Augustus and had control over the Western portion of the empire while he remained alive. Even after Gratian died in 383 CE, Valentinian II did not gain control of the whole Western Empire until the usurper Magnus Maximus' was executed in 387 CE.[160] Maximus controlled Trier, Lyons, Arles, Milan, Aquileia and Rome during his period of usurpation. Since no new types with chi-rhos appear under Maximus' authority, his coins will not be discussed in any further detail.

The only religious issue that Valentinian II settled on his own was his decision about the Altar of Victory that had been removed from the *curia* by Gratian. When Symmachus asked that Valentinian II restore the Altar of Victory, he refused.[161] The conflict between Symmachus and Ambrose of Milan over the Altar of Victory has become the epitomical battle between 'pagans' and Christians for modern scholars.[162] However, according to Cameron, there is no evidence to suggest that the statue of Victory was ever removed. Instead, it was her altar, where 'pagan' activities would have taken place, which was problematic.[163] As we have already seen, Christian

[159] Cameron (1993), 100.
[160] Maximus, a senior military official, had staged a successful coup, and he controlled the Western provinces north of the Alps until 387 when he was defeated by Theodosius I and control was given to Valentinian II (Mitchell 2007: 86-88). Theodosius even recognized Maximus as Augustus in 384 (see Errington 2006: 202).
[161] Boyd (1969), 28; Cameron (2011), 36; and Kaatz (2012), 126. Ambrose wrote to Valentinian II to refuse Symmachus' request.
[162] Cameron (2011), 40.
[163] Cameron (2011), 342. For example, the altar was the place senators dropped incense before meetings.

emperors could not have had an objection to the personification of Victory herself, as she was still a prominent feature on their coinage. In addition, even if Valentinian II had wanted to restore the altar, he would have had to consult his co-emperor Theodosius I.[164] Theodosius I, who saw himself as the senior emperor,[165] even controlled the mints of Siscia and Thessalonica after the death of Gratian, until they were temporarily restored to Valentinian II's authority in 384 CE.[166] It is, therefore, difficult to assess the coins of Valentinian II, as he was in control of various mints at different times, and he never had control of any mint for his whole reign. But even though Valentinian II only controlled his mints for a short period of time – approximately five years – 4 of 20 coin types (20%) feature either the chi-rho or the tau-rho (see **Table 5.9**).

Table 5.9 The various coin types issued under Valentinian II that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	☧	Main design	Rome	Silver
A90	'Camp gate'	☩	Main design	Thessalonica	Bronze
A92	'Emperor (or Victory) holding *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive'	☧	Main design	Aquileia, Rome, Siscia, Thessalonica, Trier	Bronze
		☩	Issue mark	Rome, Thessalonica	Bronze
A95	'Emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or sceptre; or trophy) and shield'	☧	Main design	Thessalonica	Silver

Valens was killed in 378 CE during the battle of Adrianople. After his death, Gratian chose Theodosius (379-395 CE), a Spanish general, as his co-emperor. Theodosius I ruled in the

[164] Freeman (2008), 113. Ambrose even told Valentinian II to consult with Theodosius I over the restoration of the altar (Kaatz 2012: 125-126). See Kaatz (2012: 123-126) for a complete discussion surrounding the Altar of Victory in the fourth century.
[165] McEvoy (2013), 94-95.
[166] Pearce (1933), 154 and 184. Pearce separates the coins for when each emperor had control of the mints.

East until Valentinian II committed suicide in 392 CE, and then – after a brief rule of slightly over a year by the usurper Eugenius[167] – Theodosius I controlled the whole empire until his death in January 395 CE. His rule was the last time one man would have control over the whole Empire. Regarding his religious policies, Theodosius I was a firm adherent to the Nicene Creed.[168] As I have already mentioned, Theodosius I controlled various mints in the West throughout his reign.[169] A significant percentage, albeit not as much as under Valens, of his coins – 8 of 18 types (44.44%) – were struck with either the chi-rho or tau-rho on them (see **Table 5.10**).

Table 5.10 The various coin types issued under Theodosius I that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A37	'Victory inscribing shield'	₽	Issue mark	Antioch	Gold
			Main design	Constantinople	Gold
		Ꝑ	Issue mark	Constantinople	Gold
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	₽	Main design	Constantinople	Gold
				Heraclea	Bronze
		Ꝑ	Issue mark	Constantinople	Bronze
A92	'Emperor (or Victory) holding *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive'	₽	Main design	Alexandria	Bronze
		Ꝑ	Issue mark	Alexandria, Aquileia, Antioch, Constantinople, Cyzicus, Nicomedia	Bronze
A95	'Emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or sceptre; or trophy) and shield'	₽	Main design	Heraclea	Bronze
B3	'Constantinopolis, seated on a throne, holding a sceptre (or spear) and Victory on a globe (or cornucopia)'	₽	Issue mark	Constantinople	Gold
B12	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or Victory on globe) and raising kneeling female'	₽	Main design	Milan	Gold
K4	'Empress folding arms'	Ꝑ	Issue mark	Constantinople	Bronze
K5	'Chi-rho in wreath'	₽	Main design	Constantinople	Gold
					Silver

[167] Neither the chi-rho nor the tau-rho were struck on Eugenius' coins during his brief authority over the mints.
[168] Errington (2006), 258; Kelly (2009), 29; Lee (2013), 44; and Mitchell (2007), 247. In February of 380 CE, Theodosius I issued his most famous edict, which prescribed the Nicene faith for all. See *Cod. Theod.* 16.1.2.
[169] Pearce (1933), xliii. In fact, after he stopped the usurper Maximus, he took control of all of the Western Empire, with the exception of Gaul and the mints that Eugenius briefly controlled.

When Theodosius I died in 395 CE, the empire was permanently split into the East and the West. Arcadius (383-408 CE), who had been made Augustus by his father Theodosius I in 383 CE, came into power as the sole emperor of the Eastern Empire after his father's death, and he took control of all of the Eastern mints. During his rule, 5 of 16 coin types (31.25%) were struck with either the chi-rho or tau-rho, which was less than issued under his father (see **Table 5.11**). Honorius (393-423 CE), who had been raised to the position of Augustus by his father a decade after his brother, took control of the Western mints after his father's death until his own death in 423 CE.[170] Although ruling for a longer time than his brother, Honorius' coins had nearly the same amount of chi-rhos and tau-rhos on them, with 6 of the 16 coin types (37.5%) containing either symbol (see **Table 5.12**).

Table 5.11 The various coin types issued under Arcadius that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A37	'Victory inscribing shield'	⁋	Main design	Constantinople	Gold
				Constantinople, Nicomedia	Bronze
		P	Issue mark	Constantinople	Gold
A42	'Victory holding wreath (or trophy) and palm (or wreath; or trophy)'	P	Issue mark	Constantinople	Gold
B3	'Constantinopolis, seated on a throne, holding a sceptre (or spear) and Victory on a globe (or cornucopia)'	⁋	Main design	Thessalonica	Gold
K5	'Chi-rho in wreath'	⁋	Main design	Constantinople	Silver
L2	'Emperor in chariot, raising hand and holding globe'	⁋	Issue mark	Constantinople	Gold

[170] Grierson & Mays (1992), 192-193.

Table 5.12 The various coin types issued under Honorius that feature a chi-rho or a tau-rho. The table also lists whether the symbol was a part of the main design or issue mark, the mint(s) that issued the type, and the metals the type was minted on.

Type	Brief Description	Symbol used	How it appears on the coin	Mints	Metal
A37	'Victory inscribing shield'	₽	Main design	Ravenna	Gold
A70	'Emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe'	₽	Main design	Milan, Ravenna, Rome	Silver
A92	'Emperor (or Victory) holding *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive'	Ꝑ	Issue mark	Aquileia, Rome	Bronze
K5	'Chi-rho in wreath'	₽	Main design	Ravenna	Gold
M1	'Roma and Constantinopolis holding shield with *votum'*	₽	Main design	Ravenna	Gold
M2	'Emperor holding long tau-rho'	Ꝑ	Main design	Ravenna	Gold

5.5.2 The Chi-rho as an Issue Mark

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, issue marks – or mint marks as they are usually called – were symbols placed on coins to indicate to which issue a particular coin belonged. They would not have been chosen by the emperor but rather at the level of the mint issuing the coins. Indeed, the chi-rho and tau-rho had appeared as control marks on coins before the Romans (see Chapter 3). Nevertheless, I do not think that the mint authority would have issued a mark that would have contradicted the emperor's imperial policy, and they might have even attempted to garner the emperor's favour with the marks they chose to use. Therefore, after Julian's reign and the removal of the chi-rho and tau-rho from the imperial coinage, one would hypothesize that there would be a return of their use under Jovian – because of their connection with the Constantinian dynasty, because of the use of the *labarum*, or because they were standard issue marks in the decades before Julian's reign – despite the brevity of his rule. As an issue mark, however, the chi-rho first reappears during the reign of Valentinian I on silver *siliquae* issued at Siscia between 367 and 375 CE. The coins feature a *votum* in a wreath, a prevalent type issued from most mints, for most denominations, and under most emperors (see **Figure 5.21**; Type

A112).[171] On this particular variation, the chi-rho appears in a circle at the top of the wreath that surrounds the *votum*. Although integrated within the wreath, the chi-rho is considered an issue mark since the same type from other mints – during the reigns of Valentinian I and Valens – use other symbols, such as a dot.[172] The variant with the dot, issued during the same period under the control of Valens, features a chi-rho as an issue mark. On these silver *siliquae* from Constantinople, the chi-rho is engraved within the mint's name (C☧S).[173] How the symbol is applied to these two coins is quite different: while the one integrates the chi-rho within the issue mark, the other connects the symbol with the *votum* found in the wreath.

Figure 5.21 *Siliqua* of Valentinian I minted in Siscia (*RIC IX* Siscia 12B; Type A112). The reverse features a wreath within which is inscribed VOT/X/MVLT/XX. A chi-rho appears within a circle at the top of the wreath. 367 – 375 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. B.3706).

Under Valens, several other types were issued between 367 and 375 CE that use the chi-rho as an issue mark. It is often found as an issue mark at Constantinople or, in two instances, Antioch. It is also implemented on all metal types, including: gold multiples (see **Figure 5.22**;

[171] *RIC IX* Siscia 11, 12 and 13.
[172] See, for example, *RIC IX* Constantinople 11; and Trier 23.
[173] *RIC IX* Constantinople 36e, 37 and 38.

Figure 5.22 *Gold multiple* of Valens minted in Antioch (*RIC IX* Antioch 13; Type B3). The reverse features Constantinopolis holding Victory on a globe. A chi-rho appears in the left field. 367 – 375 CE.
© Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin (no. 18200863)

Type B3);[174] *aurei* (Type A42);[175] *solidi* (see **Figure 5.23**; Type A37);[176] heavy silver *miliarenses* (Type B7);[177] light silver *miliarenses* (Type A70);[178] and bronze coins (Type A95).[179] The chi-rho does not appear on Valens' coins as an issue mark after 375 CE, even though his mints did issue coins until he was killed in 378 CE.

Figure 5.23 *Solidus* of Valens minted at Constantinople (*RIC IX* Constantinople 27; Type A37). The reverse features Victory who is inscribing *vota* legend on a shield. A chi-rho appears in the field beneath the shield. 367 – 375 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1977.158.949)

[174] *RIC IX* Antioch 13. The gold multiples are 4.5 solidi. The chi-rho appears in the right field of these gold multiples. They depict Constantinopolis, who has her foot resting on a prow. She is seated on a throne and holds Victory on a globe and a sceptre.
[175] *RIC IX* Constantinople 22. These *aurei* feature Victory holding a wreath and palm. The chi-rho appears in the left field
[176] *RIC IX* Constantinople 27 and 28. These *solidi* have Victory inscribing a *votum* on a shield supported by a small column. The chi-rho appears in the right field. It is also used as a mint mark on this type by Antioch; see *RIC IX* Antioch 21 and 22.
[177] *RIC IX* Constantinople 31. The silver coins depict Victory holding a wreath and staff, surmounted by a shield inscribed with a *votum*. Crouching captives flank Victory and the chi-rho appears in the left field.
[178] *RIC IX* Constantinople 33. These coins feature the emperor, holding a spear and a globe and resting his foot on a captive. The chi-rho appears in the right field.
[179] *RIC IX* Constantinople 17; and Nicomedia 10. A chi-rho appears in the right field on a type featuring the emperor holding a *labarum* and resting his other hand on a shield (Type A95), which will be discussed further below.

The chi-rho is only found as an issue mark on one type under Gratian's authority. It appears above the abbreviated mint's name on *siliquae* from Siscia.[180] From this point forth, the symbol is not used again as an issue mark by any mint in the West. It is, however, struck as an issue mark on coins from some Eastern mints, such as Constantinople and Antioch, the two mints that had previously used the symbol under Valens. The chi-rho was employed as an issue mark from 378 to 383 CE under Theodosius I on *solidi* at Antioch (Type A37).[181] The symbol appears on only one type in Constantinople, released on gold multiples between 383 and 388 CE (Type B3).[182] The symbol is not found as an issue mark on the coins of Arcadius or Honorius, with the possible exception of one type.

From 397 to circa 403 CE, gold multiples were minted at Constantinople that depict Arcadius in a six-horse chariot. The emperor raises his right hand and holds a globe in his left. A chi-rho appears in the left field of the coin, and donative offerings can be found in the exergue (Appendix A, Type L2).[183] Although the *RIC* does not describe the symbol as a "mint-mark," the fact that the chi-rho is placed in the left field suggests it is. However, the chi-rho's location next to the emperor's raised hand makes it difficult to tell the intention behind the symbol and if it is a part of the iconographic design.

The chi-rho was not especially prevalent as an issue mark in the final decades of the fourth century, being used only by select mints and more predominately by those in the East, particularly Antioch and Constantinople. I propose two possible reasons for this: these mints issued the symbol out of habit; or the mint masters employed the symbol to imply their

[180] *RIC IX* Siscia 18. It is the '*votum* within a wreath' type (Type A112).
[181] *RIC IX* Antioch 39. The chi-rhos appear on the right field of the 'Victory inscribing *votum'* type mentioned earlier. It should be mentioned that reversed chi-rhos (and tau-rhos), with the loop facing the opposite direction, were also used as issue marks in Antioch.
[182] *RIC IX* Constantinople 65a-b. The chi-rho appears in the left field of the Constantinopolis on a throne type mentioned above, except on these coins, she holds a spear rather than a sceptre. The gold multiples are 4.5 solidi.
[183] *RIC X*. 4 and 5. They equal nine solidi. The legend is GLORIA ROMANORVM.

connection to the emperor. For the former hypothesis, once the chi-rho had been used as an issue mark at Constantinople and Antioch under Valens, it may have been retained under Theodosius I. The latter hypothesis, although more complex, would give us more information about the use of the chi-rho in the fourth century and, therefore, I prefer it. Both Constantinople and Antioch were the locations of imperial residences and were seats of power. Constantinople, which Constantine had founded in 330 CE, was the capital city of the Empire and the location of the eastern Senate.[184] Antioch, in comparison, may have been the preferred seat of power for several emperors – such as Constantius II, Julian, and Valens – who spent more time there than in Constantinople.[185] Therefore, the mints at these two locations may have utilized the symbol to demonstrate their imperial patronage.

In addition to the chi-rho only appearing as an issue mark on coins from select mints, it was not used on any coins of low value, being struck only on gold and silver coins. Although it was never a popular issue mark under Constantine's sons, it was used on the more widely circulating bronze issues. In the second half of the fourth century, the symbol would not have been viewed in this capacity by a large portion of the Roman population. Without considering the issuing mint or the specific denomination, there were three peaks in the use of the chi-rho as an issue mark: on the coins of Constans, Valens, and Theodosius I (refer back to **Figure 5.2**). As this graph indicates, however, the symbol is found much more frequently as a part of the iconographic design on fourth-century coins, to which we will now turn.

[184] Vanderspoel (1995: 55) says that the creation of a second Senate by Constantius II in 357 CE transformed Constantinople from an imperial city to a capital. The status of Constantinople was further strengthened when Theodosius I moved his court there in 380 CE and left his officials in residence even when he had to travel elsewhere in the empire (see Errington 2006: 145).
[185] Brands (2018), 19. Valens, especially, distanced himself from Constantinople and only spent about one year there during the whole of his reign, preferring to live instead in Marcianopolis and then Antioch (Lenski 2002: 109).

5.5.3 The Chi-rho as a Main Design Element

The chi-rho remained a popular design element on coins in the second half of the fourth century as a part of the *labarum*. After Julian had had the chi-rho removed from the imperial standard, Jovian re-introduced it, and his coins attest to this reestablishment. For example, a series of solidi, minted at Sirmium and Thessalonica, depict a bound captive next to the emperor, holding a *labarum* and a globe (see **Figure 5.24**; Type A70).[186] A variant of the same type was issued on light *miliarenses* at Arles.[187] Victory tops the globe on these silver coins, and there is no captive. The return of the *labarum* indicates that despite the shift in iconography during the reign of Julian, under Jovian, the mints reverted to the traditional way of depicting the chi-rho as had been used by the Constantinian dynasty; the chi-rho was once more a symbol connected with military victory as a part of the imperial standard.

Figure 5.24 *Solidus* of Jovian minted in Sirmium (*RIC VIII* Sirmium 110; Type A70). The reverse depicts the emperor. He holds a *labarum* in his right hand and stands before a crouching captive. 363 – 364 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1860,0329.93).

The only other time the symbol is found on coins under Jovian's authority is on three very rare bronze medallions from Rome. One depicts a soldier carrying a *labarum,* marching

[186] See *RIC VIII* Sirmium 109, 110, 111 and 112; and Thessalonica 229. The reverse legend is SECVRITAS REI PVBLICE. This type is the same as the one that Constantius II had issued at Thessalonica (see *RIC VIII* Thessalonica 172-173 and 178-179). Under Jovian's authority, the coins from Thessalonica feature the captive seated in front of the emperor rather than standing to his left.
[187] *RIC VIII* Arles 328. The reverse legend is RESTITVTOR REI P. It is a variant similar to one previously minted by Magnentius (see *RIC VIII* Trier 260a). Magnentius' type appears on bronze coins with the legend FELICITAS REI PVBLICE.

ahead of the emperor. Victory, holding a wreath and a palm, stands behind the pair.[188] A second type features two bound captives standing on either side of a *labarum*.[189] The third type is the familiar chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega.[190] As mentioned above, these bronze medallions were very rare, and since they would have *only* been commemorative pieces given to elite members of court or high-ranking military officers, the iconography was not in regular circulation.[191] For this reason, I did not include them in any of the percentages or graphs discussed in this chapter.

During the reign of the emperor Valentinian I, the chi-rho appeared on coins issued from all of the Western mints under his authority. *Solidi* minted between 364 and 367 CE from Trier, Lyons, Arles, Milan, Aquileia, Rome, Sirmium, and Thessalonica have the 'emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe' type (Type A70).[192] The same reverse image was used on: gold multiples from Milan; *miliarenses* from Lyons, Arles and Rome; *siliquae* from Trier, Lyons, Arles, Aquileia and Thessalonica; and bronze coins from Lyons, Arles and Thessalonica.[193] Several Western mints continued to issue this type until Valentinian I's death in 375 CE.[194] Although this design was a continuation of a type that had already been used by Constantine I's

[188] *RIC VIII* Rome 469. The reverse legend is ADVENTVS AVGVSTI.
[189] *RIC VIII* Rome 471. The reverse legend VICTORI AVGVS (sic).
[190] *RIC VIII* Rome 474.
[191] Toynbee (1944), 41-43. Toynbee also suggests that these commemorative pieces may have been given to barbarian royals.
[192] *RIC IX* Trier 1; Lyons 1; Arles 1; Aquileia 2; Rome 2; Sirmium 1 and 6; and Thessalonica 2 and 12. The reverse legend is RESTITVTOR REIP(VBLICAE). The reverses of *RIC IX* Rome 18 and Thessalonica 22 also have an eagle holding a wreath at the foot of the emperor. The coins from Lyons sometimes have crosses on the shaft of the *labarum*. A variant of the same type was issued between 364 and 367 CE with the reverse legend SALVS REIP on *solidi* from Siscia and Thessalonica (see *RIC IX* Siscia 1 and Thessalonica 3). The emperor is also spurning a kneeling captive with his right foot on these coins.
[193] See *RIC IX* Milan 2a and 2b for gold multiples; *RIC IX* Trier 2; Lyons 5 and 6; Arles 4 and 6; Aquileia 4; Rome 7; and Thessalonica 12 for silver types and *RIC IX* Lyons 11; Arles 8 and Thessalonica 15 and 17 for bronze types.
[194] This type continued to appear on *solidi* from Trier, Rome and Thessalonica and on bronze coins from Rome between 367 and 375 CE (see *RIC IX* Trier 14; Rome 18; and Thessalonica 22 for solidi; and see *RIC IX* Rome 20 for the bronze issue). The design is also found on *aurei* from Thessalonica (see *RIC IX* Thessalonica 1). From 367 to 375 CE, a variant of the type was minted on *solidi* with the reverse legend TRIVMFATOR GENT BARB in Trier (see *RIC IX* Trier 15). It is also found on silver multiples from Trier and Siscia (see *RIC IX* Trier 22; and Siscia 8).

sons, it was much more popular under Valentinian I's authority. Variants of the type can be found on all three metal materials, suggesting a wider viewing audience.

This motif (Type A70) is also popular on the coins of Valentinian I's brother Valens. In the East, it appears on solidi, also minted between 364 and 367 CE, from Constantinople, Cyzicus, Nicomedia, and Antioch.[195] Furthermore, the type is found on: bronze coins from Nicomedia; *miliarenses* from Antioch; and *siliquae* from Nicomedia and Antioch.[196] Although this was a popular type under Valens – being produced by several of his mints and in all three metal materials – his mints did not issue the variants that are found on the coins of Valentinian I (see Ch.5, fns. 189 to 191).

Figure 5.25 *Light miliarensis* of Valentinian I minted at Siscia (*RIC IX* Siscia 3b; Type G7). The reverse depicts two emperor, each of which holds a globe and *labarum*. 364 – 367 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1869,0506.6)

There are five other types with chi-rhos minted in the West between 364 and 367 CE. The first type, which appears on light *miliarenses* from Siscia, depicts two emperors holding

[195] *RIC IX* Heraclea 1; Constantinople 3; Cyzicus 2; Nicomedia 2; and Antioch 2. It has the legend RESTITVTOR REIP. The type continued to be issued between 367 and 375 CE at Constantinople and Nicomedia (see *RIC IX* Constantinople 25; and Nicomedia 15). The standard on the coins from Antioch may sometimes also contain a tau-rho (see Pearce 1933: 269). Although tau-rhos appear in these tables, Pearce does not mention them in his descriptions of the coins, and therefore they were not included in the analysis.

[196] See *RIC IX* Nicomedia 7 and 11 for bronze coins; *RIC IX* Antioch 6 for *miliarenses*; and *RIC IX* Nicomedia 4 and 5 and Antioch 7 for *siliquae*. The legend for Nicomedia 4 and Antioch 7 is RESTITVTOR REIP. The bronze coins from Nicomedia also appeared between 367 and 375 CE (see *RIC IX* Nicomedia 24).

labara and globes (see **Figure 5.25**; Type G7).[197] At the same time, but under the authority of Valens in the East, Constantinople issued heavy *miliarenses* with a similar image.[198] On this variant, two Victories, which sit atop the emperors' globes, crown the imperial brothers. However, it is important to note that although these *miliarenses* are being issued in the East by Valens' mints, only the bust of Valentinian I appears on the obverse of the coins. These obverses are different from the coins from Siscia, which can feature the bust of either emperor.

The second type was minted on silver multiples at Thessalonica. The design is a variation of one minted during the reigns of Constantine I's sons. It shows the emperor holding a standard, topped by a chi-rho within a wreath, and resting his hand on a shield (Type A95).[199] This type is also found on *miliarenses* minted at Siscia, Aquileia, and Thessalonica[200] and on coins minted in the East under the authority of Valens, at both Constantinople and Nicomedia.[201] The chi-rho on the standard is one of four variants of the type from Constantinople. On two of the four versions, the standard features a plus (+) sign instead of the chi-rho. Intriguingly, the variants with the chi-rho, from both Constantinople and Nicomedia, were issued under the usurper Procopius, a relative of the emperor Julian. In September of 365 CE, Procopius had been proclaimed emperor in Constantinople. He maintained the title until his death in May of 366 CE, when Valens finally suppressed him completely.[202] During his brief reign, Procopius took measures to stress his connection to the Constantinian dynasty, even though he was not directly related to Constantine I or his sons.[203] One tactic he used to emphasize his relationship to his imperial predecessors was

[197] *RIC IX* Siscia 3 and 4. The reverse legend is GLORIA ROMANORVM.
[198] *RIC IX* Constantinople 8. The legend, SECVRITAS REIP, is different than on the coins from Siscia.
[199] *RIC IX* Thessalonica 7. It has the reverse legend VIRTVS ROMANI EXERCITVS.
[200] *RIC IX* Siscia 10; Aquileia 10; and Thessalonica 11.
[201] *RIC IX* Constantinople 17; Nicomedia 10. The legend is REPARATIO FEL TEMP. As mentioned in the previous section, a chi-rho also appears in the right field of these coins.
[202] Hughs (2013), 39-48.
[203] Hughs (2013), 39 and 42. He even garnered the support of troops by connecting himself with Constantius II's widow, Faustina, and daughter, Constantina Postuma.

the coins issued under his authority. Den Boeft, Lenski, and Omissi all mention that Procopius sports a beard on his coins – a link to his relative Julian – and frequently uses the reverse legend REPARATIO FEL TEMP (*the restoration of happy times*), a legend reminiscent of one that Constantius II had used.[204] But aside from mentioning the *labarum* with respect to Procopius' devotion to Christianity, they do not discuss the significance of the chi-rho itself. I would argue that the *labarum* was another method for Procopius to connect himself to the Constantinian dynasty and thus legitimatize his right to rule. The chi-rho (and the *labarum*), as we have seen, was the Constantinian symbol *par excellence* and an easy propagandistic tool for Procopius to adopt. On the other hand, Valens, who was establishing his own dynasty with his brother, would not have necessarily wanted to use the chi-rho on the same coin types that Procopius had. This theory might offer an explanation as to why this is the first time a mint used the chi-rho on some variations of the coins but not on others.

A third type, also issued from several mints, is found on a series of bronze coins from the West. It depicts the emperor holding a *labarum* and dragging a captive (see **Figure 5.26**; Type A92).[205] In the East, the type was produced at Heraclea, Constantinople, Cyzicus, and Alexandria.[206] The bronzes with the same iconography from Nicomedia and Antioch do not feature the chi-rho on the standard, which may have been the choice of the individuals in charge of these mints since *labara* occur on this type from all of the mints under Valentinian I's

[204] den Boeft (2008), 201; Lenski (2003), 98-99; and Omissi (2018), 231. See also Elm (2012), 471. The legend used by Constantius II is FEL TEMP REPARATIO, and it is not found on the coins of Julian, Jovian, or Valentinian I.
[205] *RIC IX* Trier 5; Lyons 10; Arles 7; Aquileia 7; Rome 15; Siscia 5; Sirmium 4; and Thessalonica 16. The reverse legend is GLORIA ROMANORVM. This design continued to be minted between 367 and 375 CE (see *RIC IX* Trier 30; Lyons 20; Arles 16; Aquileia 11; Rome 23; Siscia 14; and Thessalonica 26).
[206] *RIC IX* Heraclea 3; Constantinople 16; Cyzicus 8; and Alexandria 1. The iconography continued to appear on bronze coins at these mints between 367 and 375 CE (see *RIC IX* Heraclea 9; Constantinople 41; Cyzicus 12; and Alexandria 4). This is the only type minted during the reign of Valens from Alexandria that features a chi-rho. Please also note that the coins from Cyzicus are labelled as only sometimes depicting a *labarum*. On some of the coins from this series, the emperor is simply holding a standard.

authority. It is cause for pause that Antioch – on bronze coins in particular – does not use the chi-rho since this was the city that Valens had chosen as his capital (see Ch.5, fn. 185).

Figure 5.26 Bronze coin of Valentinian I minted at Rome (*RIC IX* Rome 15b; Type A92). The reverse depicts a soldier, who is holding a *labarum* in his left hand, dragging a captive. 364 – 367 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1994.123.53)

The emperor must have been aware of this design choice, at the very least, even if it was not his personal decision because he would have come into direct contact with the coins minted at Antioch more frequently.

The fourth type from this period, found on *solidi* minted at Lyons and Arles, depicts the emperor holding Victory on a globe and a *labarum* (Type G2). The personification of Victory

Figure 5.27 Gold multiple of Valentinian I minted at Thessalonica (*RIC IX* Thessalonica 19; Type G1). The reverse depicts the emperor, who is holding a *labarum* in his right hand, being crowned by Victory. 367 – 375 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1967.153.76)

also surmounts *the labarum,* and together the two Victories hold a wreath above the emperor's head.[207] A final type from the West, on gold multiples from Thessalonica, features the emperor holding a *labarum* and a globe. Victory, who holds a palm branch, stands behind the emperor and crowns him with a wreath. A captive sits before the *labarum* (see **Figure 5.27**; Type G1).[208] Neither of these types was minted under the authority of Valens in the East.

As we have seen, Valens's mints in the East adopted several of the designs with a chi-rho that had been issued under Valentinian I in the West. While the mints under the authority of Constantine I's sons had certainly borrowed iconography from each other, this manner of collusion between the two parts of the empire in terms of coin design had not been seen before. There is only one type with a chi-rho unique to Valens' mints. On these *solidi* from Antioch, Roma and Constantinopolis are seated on thrones, holding between them a shield inscribed with a *votum* (Type B6). A chi-rho appears as a part of the reverse legend, which reads GLORIA R☧OMANORVM.[209] This is the first time a chi-rho is used on coins in this manner, as a part of the coin's legend. But once again, it is the bust of Valentinian I – not Valens – found on the obverse.

Intriguingly, the chi-rho does not appear on the coins of Valens after 375 CE. I hypothesize that the disappearance of the symbol is related to the death of Valentinian I in the same year. Although several of the types they used were the same, Valens' coins are different from those of his brothers', especially when we consider the use of the tau-rho (see below). As seen in the preceding discussion, the Eastern mints did not use the chi-rho on their coins – except for the GLORIA R☧OMANORVM type – unless the symbol was also implemented in the West.

[207] *RIC IX* Lyons 15; and Arles 10. It has the legend GLORIA NOVI SAECVLI (*the glory of our age*).
[208] *RIC IX* Thessalonica 19. The legend is VICTORIA D N AVGVSTI.
[209] *RIC IX* Antioch 15.

Even on those coins from the East that did use the symbol, there were limitations placed on how it was deployed. It is usually found on coins: of a higher denomination; with Valentinian I on the obverse; or issued under the usurper Procopius. It is my opinion that Valentinian I used the chi-rho to legitimize his claim to the title of Augustus and to help dispel the fear the army held of imperial succession.[210] By employing the *labarum*, the standard connected to the Constantinian dynasty, and by appointing his brother Valens as his co-emperor, Valentinian I was founding his own dynasty. At the time of Valentinian I's death, Valens – and eventually his nephews Gratian and Valentinian II – had firmly established his familial dynasty and did not need to rely so heavily on these visual cues linking to the past.

The decrease in the use of the chi-rho as a part of the coins' iconographic design continued under Gratian and Valentinian II. Despite this decline, three types that had been previously issued in the West under Valentinian I continued to be minted. One is the 'emperor (or Victory) holding a *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive' design (Type A92) issued on bronze coins from several mints.[211] Another features the 'emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or scepter; or trophy) and shield' motif (Type A95). It was minted on light *miliarenses* from Siscia .[212] Trier, Aquileia, and Rome all issued the same type without the chi-rho on the standard. The third type was minted on silver multiples at Rome. On them, the emperor holds a *labarum* and a

[210] Ammianus Marcellinus (26.2.2-10) mentions that the army was fearful of the swift turnover of emperors that had occurred in the last few years. In order to curb the recent instability, the soldiers asked Valentinian I to appoint a co-emperor, which he agreed to do. For Valentinian I's accession, see also Lee 2013: 21-22.
[211] The legend is GLORIA ROMANORVM, and it was minted between 375 and 378 CE on coins from Lyons, Arles, Aquileia, Rome, Siscia and Thessalonica (see *RIC IX* Lyons 22; Arles 18; Aquileia 17; Rome 27; Siscia 21; and Thessalonica 31).
[212] *RIC IX* Siscia 23. This type was minted between 378 and 383 CE, with the reverse legend VIRTVS EXERCITVS. This type is a slight variation of the type minted between 367 to 375 CE that appears on the GLORIA NOVI SAECVLI bronze coins from Arles *(*see *RIC IX* Arles 15). On this variant, the chi-rho is not within a wreath, and the legend is VIRTVS EXERCITVS.

globe, while a captive crouches at the emperor's feet (Type A70).[213] As only three types were carried forward from the reign of Valentinian I, the Western mints discontinued many of the reverse types with *labara* that had been used previously.

Only two new types with chi-rhos began to be issued during the reign of Gratian between 378 and 383 CE. Gold multiples from Trier and Aquileia depict the emperor holding a *labarum*. He raises a kneeling turreted female, who holds a cornucopia (see **Figure 5.28**; Type B12).[214] As the inscription on the reverse reads RESTITVTOR REIPBVLICAE, it is possible that the turreted female is the personification of the Respublica and that the iconography reflects the statement in the legend. The emperor, raising the personification, is lifting up (as a restorer) the republic of Rome.

Figure 5.28 *Gold multiple* of Gratian minted in Trier (*RIC IX* Trier 48A; Type B12). The reverse features the emperor who is raising a turreted female with his right hand and holding a *labarum* in his left. 378 – 383 CE.
©Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin (no. 18200869)

The final type is found on large bronze coins (Æ1) and bronze medallions from Rome. The obverse of these coins depicts Valentinian II, holding a sceptre surmounted by a chi-rho (see

[213] *RIC IX* Rome 32. The legend is TRIVMFATOR GENT BARB. This type is a variant of one that had been minted before.
[214] *RIC IX* Trier 48; and Aquileia 20. The gold multiples weigh 77.23 and 39.67 grams, respectively. The reverse legend is RESTITVTOR REIPVBLICAE.

Figure 5.29; Type A21).[215] Although Gratian was the senior Augustus in the West, this was a special issue large bronze coin that would have served as a commemorative piece for Valentinian II's reign.[216] This is the first time that the chi-rho appears on the obverse of imperial coins (or medallions) since the time of Constantius II. Indeed, the symbol occurs so infrequently in this way in general that it is worth mentioning. Here, the chi-rho does not appear on the emperor's helmet or shield but his sceptre. Although Bardill associates Valentinian II's medallion with the silver multiple issued in Ticinum under Constantine I (see Ch.5, fn. 37), he does not question why this reminiscent obverse would have been minted.[217] I theorize that it was a way to legitimize the rule of the child-emperor, who would have been aged somewhere between nine and twelve when the medallion was issued.

Figure 5.29 Bronze coin of Gratian minted in Rome (*RIC IX* Rome 37; Type A21). The obverse feature a bust of Valentinian II, who is holding a sceptre surmounted by a chi-rho in his right hand. 378 – 383 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1867,1223.35)

[215] *RIC IX* Rome 37.
[216] For more on bronze medallions as commemorative pieces and their target audience, see Ch. 5, fns. 29, 30, and 188.
[217] According to Bardill (2012: 178) – who links this bronze medallion with the first appearance of the chi-rho on the silver multiples from Ticinum issued by Constantine I in 315 CE – the chi-rho surmounting the sceptre may have been the original design of Constantine's 'saving sign.'

Overall, Gratian's coins do not contain many uses of the chi-rho in general (refer back to **Figure 5.1**), which is surprising, especially since he took such a strong Christian stance in his religious policies. I believe that this indicates that the chi-rho was not *primarily* used on imperial coins as a Christian symbol. Indeed, the above evidence suggests that the chi-rho was a powerful symbol used to legitimize the ruling emperor(s).

Chi-rhos continued to be issued during the reign of Valentinian II as soon as he took official control of the mints after Gratian's death. All of the types were appropriated from those minted in the West previously, including: the 'emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe' type (Type A70);[218] the 'emperor (or Victory) holding a *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive' type (Type A92);[219] and the 'emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or scepter; or trophy) and shield' type (Type A95).[220] The content of the iconography on Valentinian II's coins is similar to those issued under previous emperors. As is evident from the above analysis, the reverse types that feature a chi-rho were starting to become somewhat static by the end of the Valentinian dynasty.

The same cannot be said, however, for the coins of Theodosius I. His coins feature the chi-rho more often than those of either Gratian or Valentinian II. While Theodosius I's reign lasted longer – something that ought to be considered when examining his coins – his mints only issued twenty-one distinct types. In comparison, Valentinian II and Gratian, with their shorter

[218] The design was issued on silver multiples at Rome (see *RIC IX* Rome 52) with the same legend as on Gratian's coins: TRIVMFATOR GENT BARB. This type continued to be minted between 388 and 393 CE on bronze coins at Rome (see *RIC IX* Rome 63). The legend has been changed to SPES REI PVBLICAE.
[219] This type was minted on bronze coins at Aquileia and Rome (see *RIC IX* Aquileia 45; and Rome 55) with the reverse legend GLORIA ROMANORVM. It continued to be used on bronze coins when Valentinian II regained control of the Western mints after Maximus' death. It was minted between 384 and 387 CE at Siscia and Thessalonica and between 388 and 392 CE at Trier (see *RIC IX* Trier 96; Siscia 38; and Thessalonica 60).
[220] These silver multiples from Thessalonica have the new legend RESTITVTOR REIPVBLICE (see *RIC IX* Thessalonica 56).

reigns, minted twenty-two and twenty-one types, respectively. Therefore, the fact that more of Theodosius I's iconographic types contain the chi-rho is noteworthy.

The chi-rho began to appear on the coins of Theodosius I as soon as he became emperor.[221] A new type, issued on *solidi* at Constantinople at the start of his reign, features Victory seated on a throne. She engraves a shield – which either rests on a small column or her knee – with a chi-rho (see **Figure 5.30**; Type A37).[222] Flaccilla, Theodosius I's wife, appears on the obverse of these solidi. This image also began to be used on bronze coins minted at Heraclea, Constantinople, Nicomedia, and Antioch.[223] A bust of Flaccilla is on the obverses of these bronze coins as well. The same type was also minted under Theodosius I's authority in Antioch, except Victory engraves a *votum* on the shield and the chi-rho appears as an issue mark. On the *solidi* from Antioch, it is the emperor who appears on the obverse. This

Figure 5.30 *Solidus* of Theodosius I minted in Constantinople (*RIC IX* Constantinople 48; Type A37). The reverse depicts Victory, who is inscribing a chi-rho on a shield. 378 – 383 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1977.158.929)

[221] Pearce lists the coins minted between 9 August 378 CE (Valens' death) and 19 January 379 CE (Theodosius I's accession) among the coins Theodosius I's mints issued until 383 CE.
[222] *RIC IX* Constantinople 48 and 49. The reverse legend is SALVS REIPVBLICAE.
[223] *RIC IX* Heraclea 13 and 17; Constantinople 55 and 61; Nicomedia 28 and 36; and Antioch 43. This design continued to be used on bronze coins from 383 to 384 CE at Siscia and Thessalonica and between 383 and 388 CE at Heraclea, Constantinople, Nicomedia and Antioch (see *RIC IX* Siscia 34 and 35; Thessalonica 46 and 47; Heraclea 23; Constantinople 81; Nicomedia 42; and Antioch 61). *RIC IX* Antioch 67 seems to be misidentified. Pearce does not include an image of this type from Antioch, so it is impossible to tell for certain. However, it was not included in my analysis.

reverse type, with Victory engraving/pointing to a *votum*, goes as far back as the first century.[224] Although this series is the first time a chi-rho ***replaces*** the *votum* on the imperial coins, we have seen the connection between the symbol and imperial *vota* throughout this chapter. As I mentioned earlier, we saw in Chapter 4 that the chi-rho was connected to the *vota* of Constantine I in the poems of Optatian. The chi-rho replaces the *vota* on most of the series of coins minted under Theodosius I, but only on those that feature the empress. This type is the first instance of an empress appearing on the same coin as the chi-rho. I contend that this is another legitimizing technique, not only linking the new dynasty to Constantine I but also associating the dynasty's power to the talismanic properties of the chi-rho, a theory that will be discussed in more detail below.

One other type with a chi-rho was minted during these years (378 to 383 CE). The mint at Heraclea released the 'emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or scepter; or trophy) and shield' type (Type A95). However, unlike the coins minted under previous emperors, this variant also has a captive seated to the emperor's left.[225] Interestingly, coins from this series issued at other mints – such as Alexandria, Thessalonica, Siscia, Nicomedia, Constantinople, and Cyzicus – do not use the chi-rho on the standard. The choice of using the *labarum* seems to have been made at the level of the individual mint (Heraclea), whereas the other mints under Theodosius I's authority reverted to the traditional depiction of the military standard (without the chi-rho).

With one exception, the majority of the remaining types with a chi-rho issued by Theodosius I's mints were recycled from the iconographic program of previous emperors. For instance, between 383 and 388 CE, the 'emperor (or Victory) holding a *labarum* (or trophy) and

[224] See, for a few examples, the following coins minted at Rome: *RIC II* Vespasian 14 and Trajan 234; *RIC III* Commodus 87; *RIC IV* Septimius Severus 211; and *RIC V* Diocletian 177.
[225] *RIC IX* Heraclea 12. This type, with the legend GLORIA ROMANORVM, also appears on bronze coins from Heraclea until 388 CE (see *RIC IX* Heraclea 22).

dragging captive' type (Type A92) appears on bronze coins from Alexandria.[226] Also during this period, Constantinople reintroduced the 'emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe' type (Type A70) on gold multiples.[227] Once again, the coins from several other mints released this type without the chi-rho on the standard.

Figure 5.31 *Siliqua* of Theodosius I minted in Constantinople (*RIC IX* Constantinople 78; Type K5). The reverse features a chi-rho within a wreath. 383 – 388 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. B. 4562).

Only one new type was issued between 383 and 388 CE, when Constantinople began releasing the image of a chi-rho within a wreath on gold *tremisses* and silver *siliquae* (see **Figure 5.31**; Type K5).[228] This issue is extremely significant because the chi-rho rarely appears as the primary image on coins. Not since the alpha and omega series issued under the usurper Magnentius had the chi-rho appeared as the principal iconography on a coin. As with the other new type (Type A37) issued by Theodosius I earlier in his reign, the empress Flaccilla appears on the obverse. Notably, this type is very similar to the '*votum* in a wreath' type (Type A112) that can be found minted during the reigns of most of the fourth-century emperors. Once again,

[226] *RIC IX* Alexandria 15. The legend is GLORIA ROMANORVM.
[227] *RIC IX* Constantinople 66. The gold multiple is equal to 3 solidi. The legend is SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE. A variant of this type, with the emperor placing his foot on a captive, appears on VIRTVS EXERCITI (*strength of the army*) bronze coins from Heraclea (see *RIC IX* Heraclea 24).
[228] *RIC IX* Constantinople 76 and 78.

Theodosius I's mints have replaced the *votum* with the chi-rho. In my Chapter 5 concluding observations found below, I discuss the connection between the chi-rho and empresses at the end of the fourth century.

Theodosius I's mints issued no coins with chi-rhos between 388 and 394 CE. The last type to have the symbol is a series of gold multiples from Milan, minted at the end of his reign (between 394 and 395 CE). They depict the 'emperor holding a *labarum* (or Victory on globe) and raising kneeling female' type (Type B12).[229] This type had previously been issued under Gratian. As towards the end of Valen's reign, Theodosius I's mints began issuing coins with the chi-rho – usually in the form of the *labarum* – less and less. It follows the general pattern the emperors of the fourth century had of using the symbol to legitimize their rule by connecting themselves to the Constantinian dynasty before gradually discontinuing the symbol from their coins – especially from the standard – as their position of power became more and more secure.

Figure 5.32 *Semissis* of Arcadius minted in Constantinople (*RIC X* Arcadius 18; Type K5). The reverse depicts a chi-rho within a wreath. 397 – 402 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1977.158.969)

[229] *RIC IX* Milan 34. The legend remains the same as it was under Gratian. The gold multiple is 1.5 solidi.

Although only three of the types issued under Arcadius' authority feature a chi-rho, the symbol was minted on his coins as soon as he took control of the mints. The 'chi-rho in wreath' type (Type K5) appears on *miliarenses* and *semisses* issued from Constantinople (see **Figure 5.32**).[230] These coins feature Arcadius' wife Eudoxia on the obverse. Therefore, the design is a direct continuation of the type first issued in Constantinople under Theodosius I, with Flaccilla appearing on the obverse. Under Honorius' authority, this type was not minted in the West until much later in his reign, between 421 to 423 CE, when it is found on *tremisses* from Ravenna.[231] Placidia, Honorius' half-sister, appears on the obverse of these coins, and they mark her elevation to the status of Augusta.[232] Once more, it is an imperial female associated with the chi-rho.

Only one other type issued under Arcadius' authority used a chi-rho. The solidi, minted from 397 until 408 CE at Constantinople, have the 'Victory inscribing shield' type (see **Figure 5.33**; Type A37).[233] The design is also found on bronze coins minted between 401 and 403 CE at Constantinople and Nicomedia.[234] During the reign of Honorius in the West, it is found on *solidi* from Ravenna minted between 421 and early 423 CE.[235] This type is the same as the one first minted under Theodosius I. As mentioned above, Flaccilla appears on the obverse of Theodosius' coins. Likewise, the obverses of these coins depict Arcadius' wife Eudoxia and

[230] The *miliarenses* were minted between 395 and circa 403 CE (see *RIC X*. 46), while the *semisses* were minted between 397 and 402 CE (see *RIC X*. 18). The reverses have no legend.
[231] *RIC X*. 1343.
[232] Her husband, Constantius III was named emperor by Honorius and shared the rule of the West with him (Salisbury 2015: 129). Placidia is an interesting figure in late antiquity. She was captured by the Goths during the sack of Rome in 410 CE and kept as a hostage by Athaulf, the brother-in-law of Alaric. Athaulf became her first husband, which removed her from her brother's control, although she did eventually have to take Constantius III (Honorius' general) as a husband after Athaulf was assassinated. She married Constantius III in 417 CE and remained in Ravenna for most of her life. For more information on the empress, see Joyce Salisbury's book *Rome's Christian Empress: Galla Placidia Rules at the Twilight of the Empire* (2015).
[233] *RIC X*. 10-13, 14, 15, 28, 32 and 32a. The reverse legend is SALVS REIPVBLICAE.
[234] *RIC X*. 101-105.
[235] *RIC X*. 1333. The outline of the chi-rho varies on these coins. For instance, on some of them, the chi-rho is double-lined.

Honorius' half-sister Placidia. Unlike on the coins with Flaccilla, the Hand of God now appears on the obverse crowning the empress. The Hand of God motif was first used on Arcadius' coins when he first took over the mints from his father.[236] This was the first time the image was used on coins since an apotheosis type produced under Constantine I's sons, which depicts Constantine I in a quadriga ascending to heaven with the Hand of God reaching down towards him.[237] This motif legitimizes the imperial women of the Theodosian dynasty: God crowns them with a wreath in the same way that Victory – even in this period – crowns the emperors. The wreath, held by Victory, not only denotes victory but also – and more importantly for our purposes – authority.[238] It is now the Christian God who bestows authority unto Placidia and Eudoxia.

Figure 5.33 *Solidus* of Arcadius minted in Constantinople (*RIC X* Arcadius 13; Type A37). The reverse depicts Victory inscribing a chi-rho on a shield. 397 – 402 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1864,1128.209).

[236] *RIC X*. 77-79, 80, 81-84. The legend is GLORIA ROMANORVM. They depict the empress Eudoxia seated on a throne being crowned by the Hand of God. A cross appears in the field of the coin.
[237] See *RIC VIII* Trier 44 and 68; Lyons 12 and 17; Arles 42; Heraclea 13 and 14; Constantinople 1, 37, 39 and 52; Nicomedia 4, 18 and 25; Cyzicus 4, 19, 25 and 30; Antioch 37 and 39; and Alexandria 4, 12 and 22 for examples of these bronze coins.
[238] Regev (2013), 202.

Figure 5.34 *Solidus* of Honorius minted in Ravenna (*RIC X* Honorius 1331; Type M1). The obverse depicts the emperor holding a spear and a shield. The shield is engraved with a chi-rho. 422 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1944.100.54947)

Although chi-rhos had appeared on Arcadius' coins at the start of his reign, they were not used after 403 CE, which almost coincides with Eudoxia's death in the following year. As previously mentioned, Honorius' mints had reused some of the designs with chi-rhos previously issued by his brother Arcadius and his father Theodosius I. Another such type is the silver multiple from Milan minted between 395 and 402 CE. These silver multiples depict the 'emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe' type (Type A70).[239] His mints continued to issue these silver multiples in Rome and Ravenna from 404 to 408 CE.[240] The only new type issued under Honorius' authority, on *solidi* from Ravenna, has an obverse that depicts the emperor holding a spear in his right hand and a shield with a chi-rho inscribed on it in his left (see **Figure 5.34**; Type M1).[241] This type, minted in 422 CE, depicts Roma and Constantinopolis on the reverse supporting a shield inscribed with a *votum* between them. The representation of the chi-rho on

[239] *RIC X*.1216. The silver multiple weighs 13.05 grams. A captive looks up to Honorius on the coins. The reverse legend is TRIVMFATOR GENT BARB, a popular legend used throughout the fourth century.
[240] *RIC X*.1260, 1261 and 1292.
[241] *RIC X*.1331 and 1332.

the shield is reminiscent of Constantine I's vision and subsequent placement of the symbol of the shields of his soldiers.

5.5.4 The Tau-Rho as an Issue Mark

During the later decades of the fourth century, there was an increase in the use of the tau-rho on imperial coins. However, it is often found as an issue mark. Indeed, the only tau-rhos to appear on Valentinian I's coins are part of the issue mark on bronze coins from Aquileia. These bronzes, minted between 364 and 367 CE, feature Victory, holding a wreath and palm branch (Type A42).[242] Although the symbol was used relatively infrequently on Valentinian I's coins and only at one mint, it is interesting that the symbol was reintroduced on his coins, as it had not been used at all during Jovian's – albeit short – reign.

Figure 5.35 *Solidus* of Valens minted in Antioch (*RIC IX* Antioch 17; Type H1). The reverse depicts the emperor who is holding a *mappa* and sceptre. A tau-rho appears in the left field of the coin. 364 – 367 CE.
©Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin (no. 18201353)

Like the coins of his brother, all of the tau-rhos found on Valens' coins are part of the issue mark. Nicomedia used the symbol on its bronze coins, which have the 'emperor with *labarum* (or spear; or scepter; or trophy) and shield' type (Type A95).[243] Antioch, too, used the

[242] *RIC IX* Aquileia 7 and 9. They are found on the top-left (Aquileia 9) or top-right (Aquileia 7) field.
[243] *RIC IX* Nicomedia 23 and 24a.

tau-rho as an issue mark on two new types: *solidi* that feature the emperor holding a *mappa* and sceptre (see **Figure 5.35**; Type H1); and gold multiples that depict the emperor riding a horse and raising his right hand (see **Figure 5.36**; Type A52).[244] The mint at Antioch used both the chi-rho and tau-rho as an issue mark during Valens' reign.

Figure 5.36 *Gold multiple* of Valens minted in Antioch (*RIC IX* Antioch 14; Type A52). The reverse depicts the emperor on horse-back. A tau-rho appears in the left field. 367 – 375 CE.
©Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin (no. 18200312)

The tau-rho does not appear again as an issue mark until the start of Theodosius I's rule when several types feature the symbol. One type struck on bronze coins at Constantinople has the emperor standing with his arms folded across his chest (Type K4).[245] Another type from Constantinople, on both the 1.5 scripulum piece as well as on the gold *semissis*, features the 'Victory inscribing shield' design (Type A37).[246] Tau-rhos are also found as issue marks on bronze coins from Antioch (Type A92), which depict Victory (instead of the emperor) carrying a trophy and dragging a captive.[247] The symbol continued to be used as an issue mark on this type between 388 and 392 CE on bronze coins from Nicomedia, Alexandria, Cyzicus, Constantinople,

[244] See *RIC IX* Antioch 2 and 17 for solidi; and 14 and 18 for gold multiples. The gold multiples are 1.5 solidi.
[245] *RIC IX* Constantinople 83.
[246] *RIC IX* Constantinople 73a-c.
[247] *RIC IX* Antioch 67a, 67b and 67d. The legend is SALVS REIPVBLICAE.

and Aquileia.[248] During Valentinian II's reign, between 388 and 393 CE, tau-rhos are minted on this type at Rome and Thessalonica as well.[249] The final type to use the tau-rho as an issue mark on the coins of Theodosius I is the 'emperor holding *labarum* (or spear) and globe' motif (Type A70).[250] Despite the fact that this type was struck at several mints, the tau-rho is only found on the coins from Constantinople, minted between 383 and 388 CE. The tau-rho, then, was minted on various bronze and gold types from several mints under Theodosius, which illustrates that the symbol was prevalent on his coins in a way it had not been under the authority of any other emperor up to this point.

While not immediately minted on Arcadius' coins when he first took control of the Eastern mints, tau-rhos began to appear on two types of coins from Constantinople between 397 and circa 402 CE. One type, on gold multiples, shows Victory holding a wreath and palm branch (Type A42). A tau-rho appears in the left field.[251] The other type, minted on *semisses*, is similar to the type described above. It depicts Victory sitting on a cuirass and holding a shield (Type A37). The shield is inscribed VOT / X / MVLT / XX, and a tau-rho appears in the right field. [252] We have already seen a variant of this type that features Victory holding a shield inscribed with a chi-rho on the coins of the Theodosian empresses.

Like the chi-rho, the tau-rho also did not frequently appear on the coins of Honorius in the West. Bronze coins, minted between 395 and 402 CE in Aquileia and Rome, have the 'emperor (or Victory) holding a *labarum* (or trophy) and dragging captive' type (Type A92). A

[248] *RIC IX* Nicomedia 45; Cyzicus 26 and 30; Constantinople 86 and 90; Aquileia 58; and Alexandria 20. This type continued to have the tau-rho as an issue mark on the bronze coins from Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Cyzicus between 392 and 395 CE (see *RIC IX* Antioch 70a and 70c; Alexandria 23a and 23b; Constantinople 90; and Cyzicus 30).
[249] *RIC IX* Aquileia 58; Rome 64; and Thessalonica 65. The legend remains SALVS REI-PVBLICAE.
[250] *RIC IX* Constantinople 83.
[251] *RIC X*.6. The size of the gold multiple is not given. The reverse legend is VICTORIA ROMANORVM.
[252] *RIC X*.16, 17, 33, and 33a. The reverse legend is VICTORIA ROMANORVM. This type was also minted from 403 to 408 CE.

tau-rho appears in the left field of the coin.[253] This type is a continuation of one issued previously under both Theodosius I and Valentinian II.

5.5.5 The Tau-Rho as a Main Design Element

The tau-rho, which was not implemented as a part of the iconographic design on the coins of Valentinian I, Valens, or Gratian, first appears in a significant iconographic position on a type issued under Valentinian II. These bronze coins from Thessalonica – released after the mint was restored to Valentinian II between 383 and 388 CE – depict a camp gate surmounted by a tau-rho flanked by two turrets (see **Figure 5.37**; Type A90).[254] Although there is the possibility that these coins were an individual engraver's choice, since another series of coins issued from Thessalonica contain a similar image without the tau-rho,[255] I would argue that such a strong visual statement would not have been made without the permission of a higher authority. Indeed, these coins are not rare, and they are found with the bust of several different emperors on the obverse.[256] Therefore, even though we cannot say with certainty that

Figure 5.37 Bronze coin of Valentinian II minted in Thessalonica (*RIC IX* Thessalonica 59b; Type A90). The reverse depicts the gate of a camp above which sits a tau-rho. 383 – 388 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1944.100.25614)

[253] *RIC X*.1237, 1238 and 1245-1249. They have the reverse legend SALVS REIPVBLICAE. Some of these coins may have been struck before the death of Theodosius I. See Kent (1993), 322, fn. 1237.
[254] *RIC IX* Thessalonica 59. The legend is GLORIA REPVBLICAE.
[255] *RIC IX* Thessalonica 62.
[256] The three different types all have a rarity rating of scarce, which is one step below common.

the emperor chose the design for this type, the image must have been in line with his iconographic agenda, as it was minted in moderate amounts (at the very least) on bronze coins that would have enjoyed greater circulation.

Tau-rhos were not used as a part of the central design on a coin again until Arcadius' reign. A series of *solidi* from Thessalonica, minted between 397 and 402 CE, use tau-rhos on the obverse of the coins. They depict the emperor, holding a shield and a spear over his shoulder. A tau-rho is engraved on his cuirass (see **Figure 5.38**; Type B3).[257] These *solidi* from Thessalonica are significant as this is the first time a tau-rho appears on the obverse of a coin.

Figure 5.38 *Solidus* of Arcadius minted in Thessalonica (*RIC X* Arcadius 37; Type B3). The obverse features the emperor in military dress. A tau-rho appears on his cuirass. 397 – 402 CE. With permission of wildwinds.com

Furthermore, the placement of the tau-rho is similar to the first use of the chi-rho – engraved on the emperor's helmet – on the coins of Constantine I. It is also reminiscent of the use of the chi-rho on the coins of Constans, where the symbol does appear on the emperor's cuirass. There seems to have been a particular connection to the tau-rho and Thessalonica since the symbol appears there as both an issue mark and part of the central iconographic imagery on

[257] *RIC X*.37-44. Significantly, the symbol is called a chi-rho in the *RIC*. When examining the coin, however, it is clear that the symbol is actually a tau-rho.

coins during the reigns of both Valentinian II and Arcadius. I can only speculate as to why this is. First, there was an important resurgence of Christianity in the fourth century in the city.[258] For instance, it was the location where the emperor Theodosius I was baptized when he fell ill on the way to Constantinople. It was also the location where, in 380 CE, Theodosius I – with the support of his co-emperors Gratian and Valentinian II – issued the infamous Edict of Thessalonica, which proclaimed Nicene Christianity the true orthodox faith.[259] Secondly, Thessalonica was the city to which Valentinian II and his court had fled in 387 CE when the usurper Magnus Maximus had invaded Italy.[260] Finally, in 390 CE, Theodosius I ordered the execution of around 7000 people in Thessalonica – known as the Thessalonica massacre – after several of his officers had been killed in a riot.[261] The mint may have used the tau-rho on the coins of Arcadius as a way of re-forging an imperial relationship and important patronage. At the end of the fourth century, Thessalonica was the location of several key occurrences. It may have been a combination of these events that led to the use of the tau-rho – which, as I have established in previous chapters, was a Christian symbol centuries before the fourth century – on the coins issued from the mint.

The final type to feature a tau-rho was issued on *solidi* at Ravenna sometime shortly after Arcadius' death. It depicts the emperor Honorius holding a long tau-rho in his right hand and placing his left hand on the hilt of his sword. The Hand of God is crowning him, and he places his foot on a serpent-tailed lion (see **Figure 5.39**; Type M2).[262] According to Kent, the

[258] Hoddinott (1963), 108.
[259] Williams & Friell (1994), 40-41.
[260] McEvoy (2013), 90. I believe that the camp gate coins (Type A90) were issued while Valentinian II was in Thessalonica.
[261] Williams & Friell (1994), 55-56. The riot was caused by the arrest of a favoured charioteer, who was accused of homosexual relations.
[262] *RIC X*.1310 and 1311. The reverse legend is VICTORIA AVGGG.

iconography on this coin merges the emperor with Christ.[263] However, Doyle suggests that the imagery signifies the emperor's triumph over his various enemies, those that he had overcome since he first became emperor as a child.[264] I contend that this coin further demonstrates the Christian significance of the tau-rho and directly links the tau-rho with the cross, as the 'emperor holding a long cross' would become a standard iconographic design on the coins of the fifth century.[265] This design supports Hurtado's supposition (see Chapter 3) that the tau-rho was an early form of the cross. Although the intention behind the coin is unclear, this is the first time that the tau-rho is used in such a prominent position on the coins of any of the emperors.

Figure 5.39 *Solidus* of Honorius minted in Ravenna (*RIC X* Honorius 1310; Type M2). The reverse depicts the emperor being crowned by the hand of God. The emperor holds a long tau-rho in his right hand. 408-423 CE.
© American Numismatic Society (ANS 1944.100.54946)

[263] Kent (1993), 132.
[264] Doyle (2015), 169. See also McEvoy (2013), 206.
[265] See, for example, *RIC X*.1808, 10.2018, and 10.2608 for the coins of Theodosius II, Valentinian III, and Majorian, to name a few.

5.6 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

I suggested above that emperors would have had more say on the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho when they were a part of the main iconographic design of coins – such as a part of the *labarum* – rather than issue marks. However, it is unlikely that an official in charge of a mint would have issued a coin with a symbol of which the emperor disapproved. With this in mind, several observations can be made about the usage of the tau-rho and chi-rho on the coins of the fourth-century emperors. First, issue marks were a popular way to present these symbols on the coins of the emperors throughout the fourth century. The use of the chi-rho as an issue mark peaked during Valens' reign, while the tau-rho reached its height of utilization as an issue mark under Theodosius I. By the beginning of the fifth century, the use of both symbols as issue marks had begun to decline.

By examining the two graphs in **Figure 5.2**, we see that there was a spike of the chi-rho's usage as part of the iconographic design on coins during the reigns of three emperors: Constans; Valentinian I; and Theodosius I. These spikes are nearly identical to the increased use of the chi-rho as an issue mark during these same periods. The one exception is found on the coins of Valens, which use the chi-rho as an issue mark more frequently than those of Valentinian I. As we saw above, however, this is slightly misleading since Valens' mints copied types that had already been issued in the West. When we consider these peaks of use, it seems apparent that the chi-rho – as both an issue mark and a component in the main design – was implemented to smooth over imperial successions. Constans secured his right to rule through his father, whereas Valentinian I and Theodosius I established a sense of security with their own dynasties by linking themselves to the Constantinian line.

The use of the chi-rho as a legitimizing device is ironic since the second thing one can determine from studying the imperial coins is that Constantine I's mints did not distribute many coins with chi-rhos or tau-rhos (refer back to see **Figure 5.1**). Tau-rhos are only – very rarely! – found as issue marks on his coins and the coins of his sons, which further supports the conclusion reached in Chapter 4 that the chi-rho is the 'Constantinian' monogram. The chi-rho is found equally as a part of the main design and as an issue mark on Constantine I's coins. In both instances, the symbol would have been readily discernable – on most denominations – to the audiences receiving the image, whether or not it could be interpreted "correctly." This is very different from today, where issue marks are so small that they can go unnoticed until they are brought to someone's attention (see **Figure 5.40**). As we saw in Chapter 2, it is also crucial to consider the metastructure of the object on which a symbol appears. As an issue mark, even if they were discernible, the chi-rho and tau-rho would have been more negligible.

Figure 5.40 A mint mark ('P') on a 2017 American penny. The 'P', which represents the mint in Philadelphia, PA, is found below the date of the coin. Here, the mint mark is clear as the image is magnified, but it still appears smaller than the issue marks found on late Roman coinage.
Photo taken by author (2022)

A third comment on the coins of the fourth century is the use of military themes. The reverse legends convey the military might of the army and the emperor. For example, legends having to do with the army – including GLORIA EXCERCITVS and VIRTVS EXERCITVS ROMANI – appear on the coins minted during the reigns of Constantine I's sons. The VIRTVS

EXERCITVS legend (and its variants) continued to be minted on the coins of the fourth and fifth centuries.[266] Whatever iconography was depicted on the reverses, these legends indicate a preoccupation with the army, Roman security, and military superiority. In addition, the chi-rho – as employed by Constantine I's mints – has a military connotation. In 315 CE, when the symbol first appears on the silver multiples from Ticinum, it is within a military context. These silver multiples, which have chi-rhos engraved on Constantine I's helmet, began a tradition of placing the symbol in military-themed iconography that continued to feature on the coins of his successors.

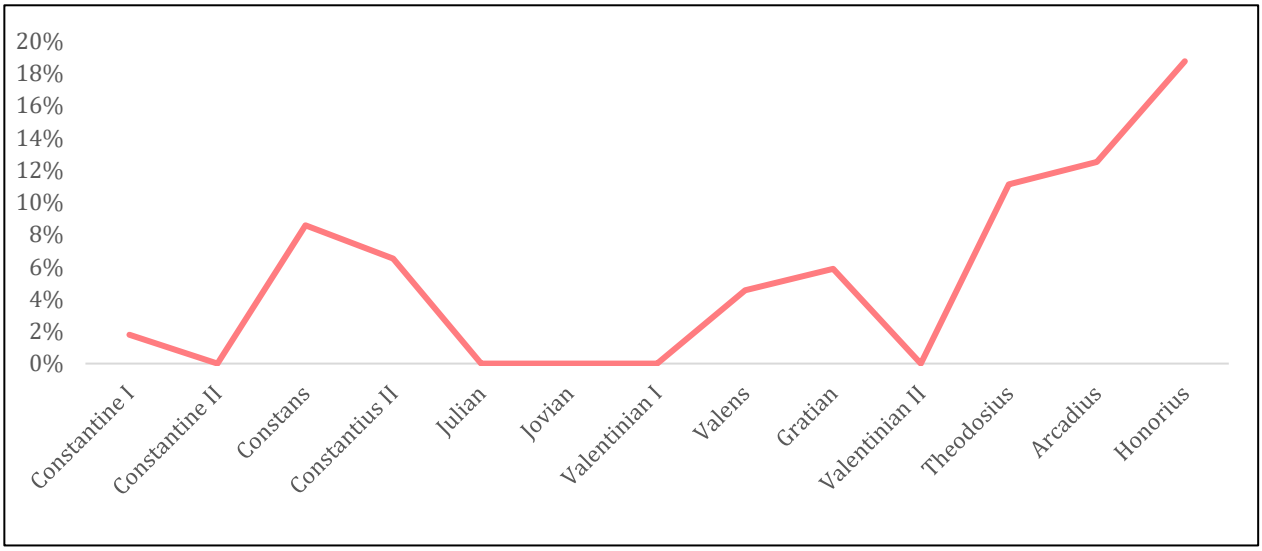

Figure 5.41 A graph of the percentages of chi-rhos used as the main design element, excluding the *labarum*, on the coins of fourth-century emperors.

Throughout the fourth century, the emperors' mints used the chi-rho in connection with military themes. **Figure 5.41** presents the chi-rho's inclusion as a part of the iconographic design on coins without incorporating its use as an element of the *labarum*. With the removal of instances of the chi-rho featured as a part of the *labarum*, we see a drastic decrease in its occurrence on the emperors' coins, especially when the graph is compared to the one in **Figure**

[266] See *RIC VIII* p. 564 and 566; *RIC IX* p. 322; and *RIC X* p. 485. The reverse of these types often depicts the emperor or a soldier.

5.2. From Constantine I to Theodosius I, the predominant type to feature a chi-rho depicts the emperor, or Victory, holding a *labarum*. The *labarum*, a replacement for the traditional standard (*vexillum*), represented not only military victory but victory as granted by the *Christian* God. The fact that Constantine I first used the image lends to the stories of his conversion and could have been used as 'propaganda' to remind the empire of the power bestowed upon him by God. Other fourth-century emperors used the image as well, which may have been a way for them to connect themselves not only with Constantine I's reign but also with the authority and military dominance granted to him by God. The placement of the symbol on the armour and shields of Constantine I and his sons indicates that it is more closely associated with the Constantinian dynasty than any other reign. It is only minted in this way on the coins of Constantine I and his family. Additionally, once the symbol had been connected with Constantine's victory at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, its use on the standard might have become a customary apotropaic symbol to ensure military success, which is something I discuss more in Chapter 7.

An exploration of which mints employed the symbols also produces noteworthy results. These findings are displayed in **Figure 5.42**, which orders the mints from West to East and separates the findings by how the symbols are deployed on the coins. As indicated, the chi-rho features as a part of the iconographic design most frequently on the coins minted at Ravenna and Siscia.[267] Although more prevalent at these two mints, the chi-rho was still minted as a part of a coin's design with some frequency across most of the mints. The tau-rho, too, as an iconographic design component is most popular in Ravenna, but, as these graphs demonstrate, it was rarely used in a coin's main design. The only other instance occurs on coins from Thessalonica. There

[267] It should be noted that percentages were calculated by dividing the number of types with either symbol from each mint by the number of types issued by each mint. For instance, Ravenna issued a total of twelve types during the period studied, whereas Siscia minted fifty. The fact that particular emperors used certain mints more often than others should be considered when looking at these results.

is also a clear division between which mints issued the symbols as issue marks, with the chi-rho and tau-rho being deployed more frequently from the western and eastern mints, respectively. Pearce has argued that the omission of the tau-rho on certain Eastern bronze coins may have been because of the Arian controversy, and thus he connects the symbol with Nicene Christianity.[268] Yet this study has shown that the tau-rho was predominantly used as an issue

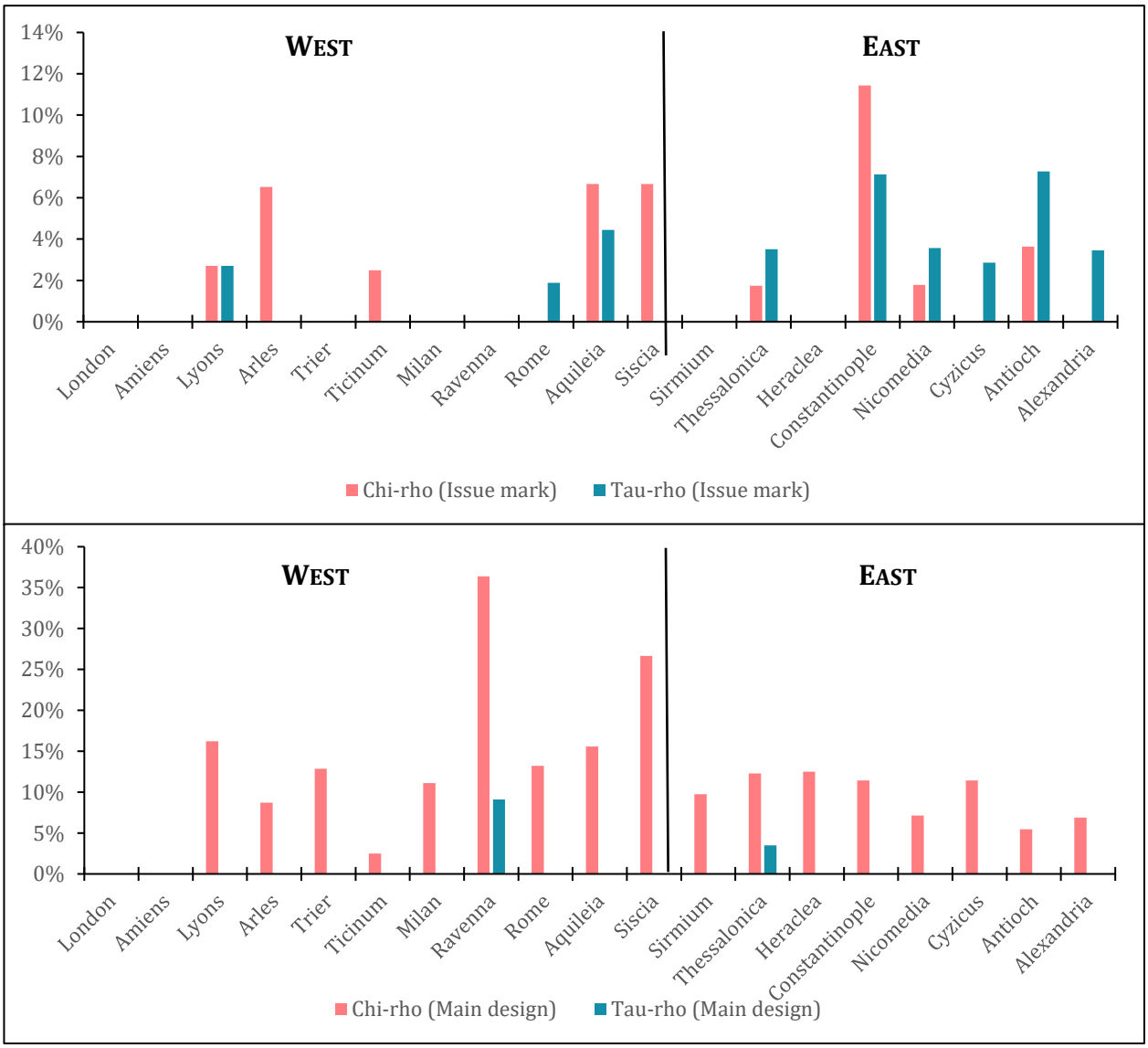

Figure 5.42 A graph of the percentages of chi-rhos and tau-rhos used by each mint either as issue marks (above) or main design elements (below) on the coins of fourth-century emperors.

[268] Pearce (1933), xli.

mark in the East. Furthermore, the tau-rho was a prevalent issue mark on the coins of Valens, an Arian emperor. The symbol would not have been used with such frequency on his coins if it went against his religious doctrine.

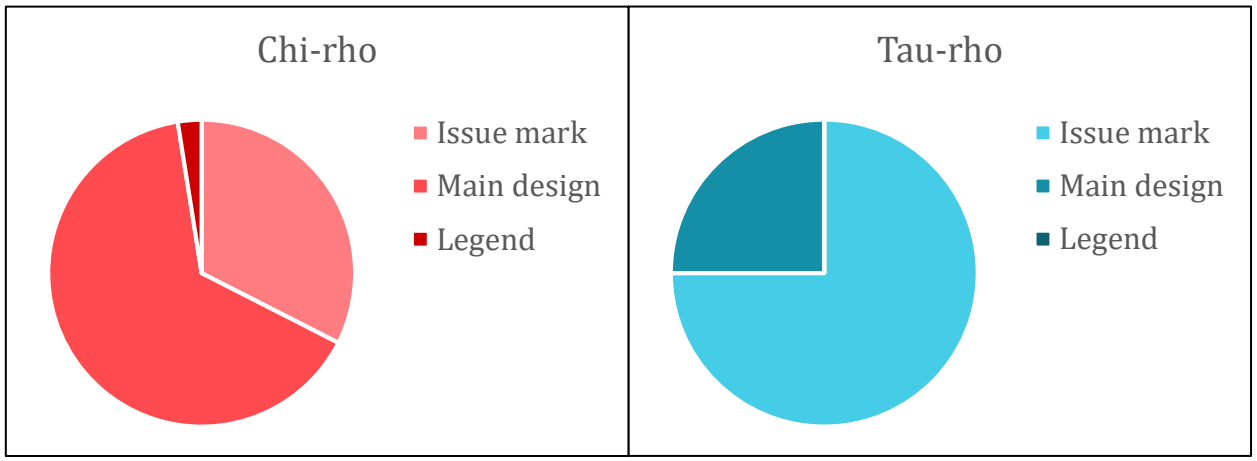

Figure 5.43 A graphic representation of the amount of types with chi-rhos and tau-rhos as main design elements, issue marks, or legends on the coins of fourth-century emperors.

A fourth observance to be made from these results is that the chi-rho is far more common on the fourth-century coins than the tau-rho. On the coins of Constans and the usurper Magnentius, we begin to see the chi-rho as the prominent image on some types of coins, such as the bronze type that has a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega. **Figure 5.43** gives a breakdown of the frequency of the chi-rho and tau-rho as either a part of the main design or an issue mark. As these pie charts indicate, the chi-rho was used far more frequently as a component of the central iconography of the coin than as an issue mark, while the opposite is true for the tau-rho.

The tau-rho began to be employed more on coins towards the end of the fourth century, even being used as a part of the iconographic design of coins. The use of the symbol peaks twice, under the authority of Valens and Theodosius I. However, during the Theodosian dynasty, it reached its zenith of use, especially as a symbol integrated into the iconographic design and not

as a free-standing symbol. As we have seen, the chi-rho was a device connected to Constantine I and his sons and was deployed to legitimize the reigns of new emperors. I posit that the tau-rho was a symbol of the Theodosian dynasty. The reigns of Constantine I – the first Christian emperor – and Theodosius I – the emperor who made Nicene Christianity the religion of the Empire – are bookends for the fourth century. Each emperor promoted his own apotropaic symbol (see Chapters 7 and 8) that sanctioned his imperial claim by the will of God.

A fifth result to come to light from this analysis is the increased connection of the chi-rho with Christian empresses. Although empresses had appeared on fourth-century coins before – for instance, Helena and Fausta[269] – they had not appeared with the chi-rho. At the end of the fourth century, coins commonly feature a chi-rho on the same type an empress appears on the obverse. This trend begins under Flaccilla, Theodosius I's wife, when her bust appears on the obverse of the 'Victory inscribing a shield' type (A37). According to Holum, exchanging the *votum* legend with a chi-rho is "a distinct but trivial reverse type for an empress."[270] But I question his off-hand dismissal of this reverse type. As stated above, the chi-rho replaces the *votum,* and since empresses could not issue their own *vota,*[271] I speculate that the chi-rho functioned as a replacement of the vows given by – and for – emperors for a long, prosperous reign. The chi-rho confirms the empress' role as Augusta of the Roman people and also her benefaction of the Church.

Moreover, at the end of the fourth century, the empresses were major Christian patronesses involved in ecclesiastical decisions, charitable donations, and Church building.[272]

---

[269] The empresses appear on several bronze coins with laurel wreaths inclosing eight point stars on the reverses. For an example of these coins, see *RIC VII* Thessalonica 48 and 49.
[270] Holum (1982), 32.
[271] Grierson & Mays (1992), 33.
[272] See, for example: Flaccilla, who was known for her piety and helping the less fortunate (Drake 2006: 210; and Doyle 2019: 42-43); Eudoxia, who gave 200 pounds of gold towards the building of a church at Gaza and was personally involved in ecclesiastical affairs, such as her public disagreements with the Archbishop of Constantinople

Garipzanov states that chi-rho was a visual symbol for the "new pious image" of the Theodosian empresses.[273] This visual piety can also be seen with the images of the empresses and the Hand of God that became a popular motif on coins towards the end of the fourth century. It has been suggested that the iconography reflects the elevation of an empress to the title of Augusta.[274] But more than that, it implies that her elevation is because of God. Similarly, Victory confers authority and power to the emperor by crowning him on Roman coins. The culmination of this iconography is the empress' *vota* exchange – *do ut des* (*I give so that you may give*) – with God. He has granted her power so that she will contribute to His Church.

Perhaps the most striking fact to come from this analysis is how differently the chi-rho and tau-rho were used on fourth-century coins. I have already demonstrated that they were employed in iconographically distinctive ways. Even more telling is the material that the symbols were struck on. **Figure 5.44** displays the percentages of the instances of the chi-rho and tau-rho on gold, silver, and bronze coins. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, different segments of the Roman population would have had access to coins of different denominations and, therefore, material. This graph indicates that the chi-rho was used as a part of the iconographic design on slightly more silver coins than bronze. This usage is unsurprising when we consider that the chi-rho is found in connection with military themes, and silver was the primary form of payment to soldiers. As both an issue mark and a part of the main design, the chi-rho appears on all three metals.

John Chrysostom (Cameron 1993: 179; Hunt 1982:142-143; and McClanan 2002: 19-20); and Galla Placidia, who had a church to John the Evangelist built in Ravenna and helped to raise the status of the Virgin Mary to the Mother of God (Salisbury 2015: 150-151 and 203-204). These empresses may have been following in the footsteps of Constantine's mother Helena, who was a devotee of the Church and was said to have found the true cross. For more information on the link between Helena and Byzantium empresses, see Herrin (2001: 242-248).

[273] Garipzanov (2017), 327-328.

[274] Holum (1982), 66. According to Kent, however, there is no satisfactory explanation for the Hand of God on the empresses' coins (1994: 52). He suggests that some empresses had authority during periods of unrest, which could explain the motif (see Kent 1994: 64).

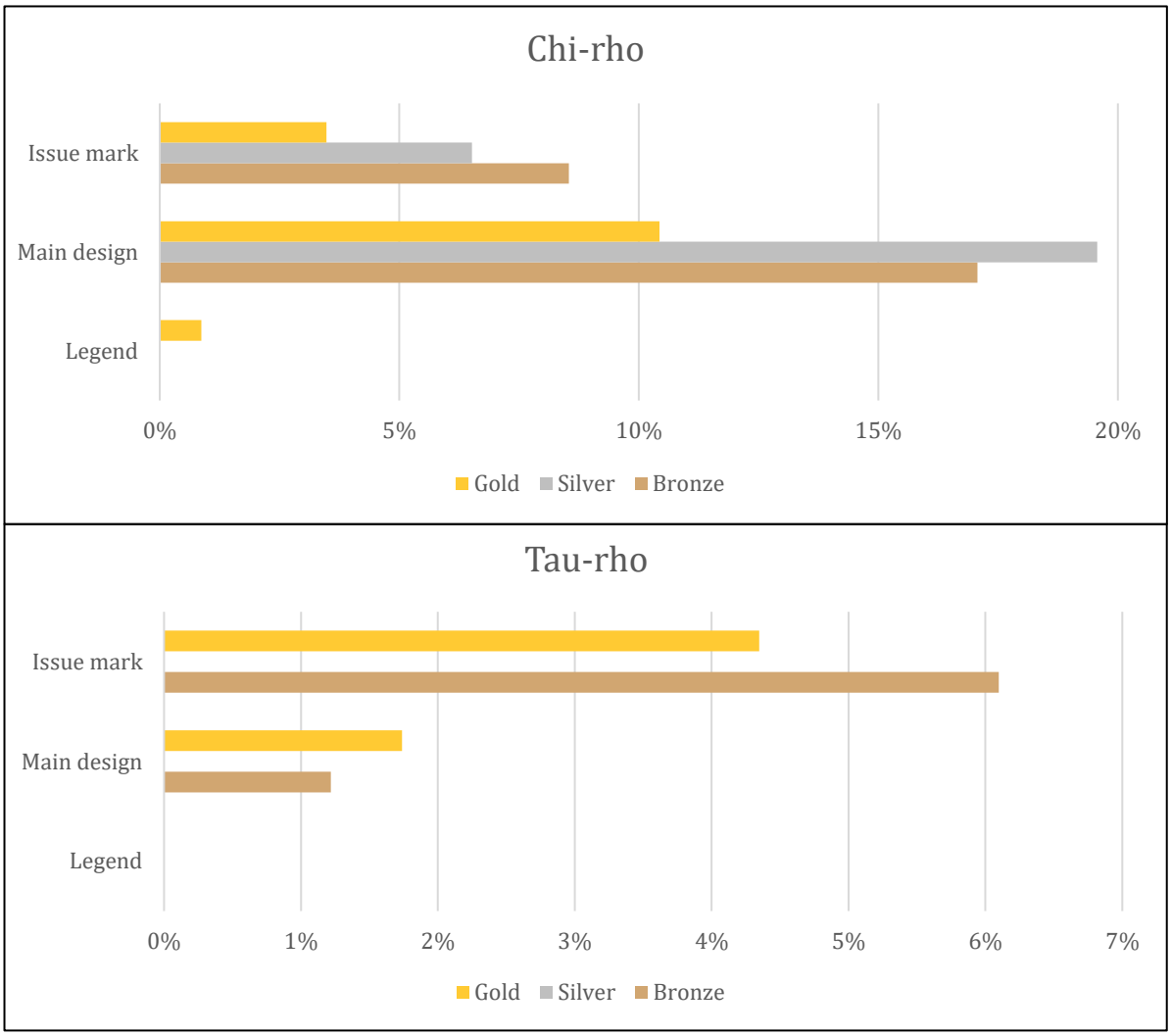

Figure 5.44 A graph of the percentages of the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho on gold, silver, and bronze coins in the fourth century.

This is not the case for the tau-rho, which is only minted on gold or bronze coins. The absence of the symbol on silver coins – even though silver was used as a minting material throughout the fourth century – suggests that it was not semiotically linked to the army, as was the *labarum*. The tau-rho was certainly not associated with the Constantinian dynasty, especially when considering its use on the obverse of coins. The tau-rho is not found on coins engraved on the armour of an emperor until the type minted under Arcadius, which was issued fifty years after the chi-rho had first appeared in a similar way on the coins of Constans. This result supports

my hypothesis that the tau-rho functioned as a dynastic symbol for the Theodosians, paralleling the use of the chi-rho as a dynastic tool for the Constantinians.

I have made several assumptions throughout this chapter while analyzing the fourth-century coins. The first is that the incumbent emperor would have had some say in what iconography was placed on his coins. However, even if we supposed that the emperor was a passive player for selecting the motifs, they would have still reflected his authority. Moreover, although the emperor might not have chosen the imagery for every type issued, these decisions would have echoed the imperial court and its presentation to the public. The second assumption that I have made is that those viewing the coins would have understood the meaning behind the use of the symbols. This is certainly not the case, especially for those removed from the emperor and not 'in the know.' Thirdly, I have argued that the chi-rho is a dynastic and apotropaic symbol on coins, without always acknowledging its underlying Christian characteristics. The symbol would have likely semiotically referenced Christ – and only Christ – to some (likely Christian) viewers. However, I would argue that the way in which the symbol is used on the coins of the fourth century, especially as a part of the *labarum*, would have brought to mind the Constantinian dynasty: the Constantinian dynasty that was granted power by the God of the Christians.

CHAPTER SIX

EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE: THE USE OF THE CHI-RHO AND TAU-RHO IN FOURTH-CENTURY INSCRIPTIONS

Good frend for Iesus sake forbeare,
to dig the dust encloased heare.
Bleste be ye man yt spares thes stones,
and curst be he yt moves my bones.

Shakespeare's epitaph, Church of the Holy Trinity

****

This chapter explores the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho as found in fourth-century inscriptions from throughout the Roman Empire. In order to compile a comprehensive database, I consulted several corpora of Latin and Greek inscriptions. In total, over 183000 inscriptions[1] from the following works were examined: the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (CIL)*; the *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae (ICUR)*; the *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres (ILCV)*; the *l'Année Épigraphique (AE);* the *Inscriptiones Graecae Christianae Veteres Occidentis (IGCVO);* and the online database of Christian inscriptions from Rome, the *Epigraphic Database Bari (EDB)*. Perhaps the most serious disadvantage of this approach was the potential to miss the symbols when scanning through tens of thousands of inscriptions. However, given that the total number of inscriptions collected for my sample was 4060, any inadvertently missed inscriptions would not vastly skew the achieved results. Once my examination of all the volumes from the various works was complete and intending to produce a more accurate analysis of fourth-century

[1] This number is an estimate only, as the exact number of inscriptions studied is impossible to calculate because oftentimes several inscriptions are listed under the same catalogue number (for example, *ICUR* 17958a, 17958b, etc.). It is also important to note that some of the inscriptions examined were duplicates, either because the same inscription could appear in multiple volumes of the same work or because it could be found in multiple compendia.

inscriptions, I sorted my dataset and removed all duplicate inscriptions from across the multiple catalogues.

Although my dataset is a representative sample of the chi-rho and tau-rho in fourth-century inscriptions, it is by no means complete.[2] Archaeologists are continually finding new inscriptions not included in the above-mentioned collections. Furthermore, the decision of which inscriptions to include in any particular volume was the editor's prerogative, and these choices impacted the ultimate form of my database. Finally, some inscriptions were not included in my dataset because I could not determine if the editor of the particular volume was referring to a chi-rho or a tau-rho. This ambiguity principally occurred when an editor described a symbol as a *chrismon*, as some applied the term indiscriminately to both symbols.[3] However, examining several different corpora will have balanced the effect of any of these potential biases in my data sample.

Most of the 4060 inscriptions collected for this study have been imprecisely dated – based on stylistic grounds – between the third and the seventh century, with the majority dating to the fourth and fifth centuries. However, since the objective of this dissertation is studying the meaning of the chi-rho and tau-rho in the fourth century, only those inscriptions securely dated by consular dating – from Constantine's conversion in 312 CE until the death of Arcadius in 408 CE – are pertinent to my analysis. By narrowing the scope of my examination in this way, only 225 inscriptions (around 5.54%) remained from my original dataset of 4060 inscriptions. The relatively small size of my core data sample needs to be kept in mind as I draw my conclusions throughout this chapter.

[2] With a confidence level of 99%, my sample of 4060 inscriptions from a population of 183,187 inscriptions has a margin of error of plus or minus 2%.
[3] This was especially the case for *CIL Volume II, Part XIV*.

After examining non-funerary and funerary inscriptions with the chi-rho and tau-rho, this chapter will turn to a case study of the inscriptions from Rome, the best-documented area for early 'Christian' epigraphy and epitaphs.[4] Finally, the chapter will conclude with some general trends in the use of the two symbols in inscriptions throughout the empire. Since, as we shall see, the vast majority of the inscriptions discussed in this chapter are epitaphs, they will be the chapter's primary focus. Therefore, before delving into examples of securely dated inscriptions that use either symbol, I will first briefly introduce Christian epitaphs from the pre-Constantinian era.

6.1 A Brief Account of Early Christian Epitaphs

For the first few centuries after the advent of Christianity, it is challenging to separate Christian from 'pagan' inscriptions. It is only during the third century CE, when Christian epitaphs begin to become more overt, that scholars can differentiate them from 'pagan' epitaphs with any certainty. These early Christian inscriptions are distinguishable because they are often extremely concise, containing only the deceased's name and age at death.[5] However, even if one supposes that an inscription – datable to the third century CE – is Christian because of its brevity, it is only possible to say so with any authority when the context in which it is found supports this conclusion: for example, if the inscription comes from a Christian cemetery. Conversely, without knowing the context of the find, any inscription from the first three centuries CE containing only the *tria nomina* and the deceased's date of death cannot be completely ruled out as Christian.

[4] We need to be cautious in assuming that all inscriptions included in Christian catalogues (such as the *ICUR*) are actually Christian, as some inscriptions are included simply because of the presence of the chi-rho or the tau-rho. As we shall see below, however, I do not think that all such uses of the chi-rho are meant to convey any religious meaning.
[5] Cooley (2012), 231; and Keppie (1991), 121.

With the spread of Christianity among the upper class in the fourth century, new distinctly Christian funerary inscriptions emerged.[6] I believe that the cessation of the persecutions and the acceptance of the religion under Constantine could have only facilitated the development of a new Christian funerary vocabulary. Some of these new Christian formulae, such as the phrase *in pace*, will be explored in more detail below.

To further complicate matters, even in the fourth century CE, it is often difficult to separate Christian epitaphs from 'pagan' ones because of their similarities. There were two principal attitudes towards the afterlife in traditional Roman religious belief: life after death and no life after death. In epigraphs, the later belief is expressed with the abbreviation NF F NS NC, standing for *non fui, fui, non sum, non curo* (I did not exist, I existed, I do not exist, I do not care).[7] On the other hand, the use of the abbreviation D M (S), *dis manibus (sacrum)* ((Sacred) to the Manes, i.e. the spirits of the dead), declared a belief in the afterlife, as it was an invocation for the protection of the deceased's soul.[8] Since Christians also believed in life after death, they borrowed *D M S* for their epitaphs. One example comes from a grave stele found in Larissa, Greece.

> *D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum) | sig[no c]hristi | Fl(avia) V[ell?]eia ma|trona tribuni | domina manci|pio[r]u(m), uixit | an[no]s XXIIII | in [d]omo dei | posita est*
>
> Sacred to the Manes, in the sign of Christ, Flavia Velleia, wife of a tribune, mistress of slaves, lived 24 years. She is placed in the house of God.
>
> *CIL III* 7315 = *ILCV* 2184

The inscription, which mentions both the sign of Christ and the house of God, also features a chi-rho within a wreath. Despite the 'pagan' connotations of the abbreviation *D M S*, the rest of the evidence on this epitaph suggests that Flavia Velleia was a Christian.

[6] Cooley (2012), 231.
[7] Handley (2003), 9.
[8] Cooley (2012), 232; Handley (2003), 9; and Stern (2008), 263-264.

According to Carroll, the *D M (S)* formula was used regularly in Christian contexts to protect the tomb.[9] Cooley adds that it appears in Christian funerary inscriptions in Rome until the mid-fifth century and is evident even longer elsewhere in the Empire, such as North Africa.[10] While Flavia Velleia's gravestone mentions both Christ and God, sometimes the references to Christianity are not as blatant. For example, the inscription on the tomb of Iulia from Maktar (Tunisia) uses the *D M S* formula while also having a chi-rho within a circle.[11] There are no other religious markers in the inscription. Assuming they understood both the D M S abbreviation as a reference to the Manes and the chi-rho as a reference to Christ, would the ancient viewer have been confused by this inscription? Would the formula and symbol have contradicted each other? I think that this would not have been the case. If we view both the *D M S* formula and the chi-rho as apotropaic, which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 7, there is no contradiction. I hope these examples highlight that using certain formulae (or symbols) alone does not necessitate adherence to a particular religion, especially during the religious negotiation occurring in the fourth century.

Fortunately for scholars, selective wording and the use of certain formulae on funerary inscriptions are not the only means of determining the religion of the deceased person (or, perhaps, it is more accurate to say the intended religious message of those who commissioned the epitaph, in most cases the family of the deceased).[12] Even within the first few centuries CE, Christians used decorative motifs on their epitaphs. Along with the similarities to the traditional

---

[9] Carroll (2006), 266-267. For example, see *ICUR* 15330: *d(is) m(anibus)* | *Mavortius qui vixit* | *annis XVIII mense uno di*|*ebus VIIII depos(itus) idib(us) octobrib(us)* | *decessit III id(us) s(upra) s(criptas).* The only indication that this is a "Christian" inscription – if that is the appropriate way to conceptualize it – is that it was found in a Christian cemetery in Rome.

[10] Cooley (2012), 232.

[11] *CIL VIII* 23579. The existing inscription is: *d m (s)* | *Iulia for*|*tunat(a ui)*|*xit ann*|*…dies…*

[12] See Ian Morris' *Death-Ritual and Society in Antiquity* for a more thorough discussion of burial customs. Morris states that funerary inscriptions were made for those who performed the funerary rituals and do not tell us much about the realities of the demographics of the deceased (1992: 159).

Roman religions, there are stylistic resemblances between Christian and Jewish epitaphs and, oftentimes, it is only the imagery used alongside the vocabulary that allows scholars to distinguish between epitaphs of the different religions.[13] Early on, Christians had begun to adopt symbols – such as the anchor, the fish, or even the *orans* (a person with their arms raised in prayer) – that had been previously used in the traditional Roman religions and imbued them with a new sense of Christian symbolism.[14] The repertoire of images expanded over time to include doves, olive branches, and palms.[15] It is the combination of these symbols with linguistic practices that allows scholars to hypothesize on the 'Christianity' of certain epitaphs before the fourth century.

In the fourth century – but not before (see Chapter 3) – the chi-rho was added to the repertoire of motifs used on funerary inscriptions. According to Cooley, this was the only symbol that was exclusively Christian.[16] Nevertheless, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, the chi-rho was a symbol borrowed from 'pagan' tradition, further complicating its intended symbolism in inscriptions. In the fourth century – especially as the century progressed – one cannot completely divorce the chi-rho from Christianity. This link to Christianity was evident on some of the coins discussed in the last chapter, such as those featuring the Theodosian empresses, and, as we shall see later in this chapter, the chi-rho is sometimes inscribed alongside other Christian motifs such as doves and palms, which further contextualizes its Christian symbolism. In addition, Handley states that epitaphs often feature the chi-rho flanked by the alpha and omega.[17] When used

[13] Handley (2003), 11.
[14] Mazzoleni (2015), 450.
[15] Cooley (2012), 232.
[16] Cooley (2012), 232.
[17] Handley (2003), 10. Handley states that the alpha and omega can either flank the chi-rho or hang off its cross-bar. Since the chi-rho does not have a cross-bar, Handley must be referring to the tau-rho. Several examples of the Greek letters hanging off of a tau-rho exist (see, for example, *CIL II.V* 337; *CIL V* 1645; *CIL V* 6401; and *CIL XI* 941. As we shall see, it is extremely problematic that Handley does not differentiate between the chi-rho and the tau-rho.

together with these Greek letters, the chi-rho is more likely to be semiotically interpreted as Christian and, from there, a stronger argument can be made that the deceased was a follower of Christianity.

A final obstruction when attempting to determine whether an inscription is 'pagan' or 'Christian' – if such a strict dichotomy exists in the fourth century– is the re-use (or defacement) of material evidence. The re-use of stone was common throughout the Roman world and spoliation was particularly practiced in Late Antiquity.[18] The defacement of public artworks was also widespread in antiquity: from the destruction of the property and image of a condemned emperor (*damnatio memoriae*) to the destruction of temples and idols (iconoclasm).[19] In the fourth century, several laws were put in place to protect against the destruction of 'pagan' temples and idols, indicating that this was an ongoing issue.[20] An example of how this affects the interpretation of the chi-rho and tau-rho comes from a marble cult inscription from Laodicea on Lycus, Phrygia (near modern Denizli, Turkey). The inscription, which was found near the nymphaeum, dates to 141/2 CE and refers to a patron of Apollo's cult.[21] Sometime later, a chi-rho, flanked by alpha and omega, was painted over the engraved letters.[22] The inclusion of the alpha and omega points toward a Christian reading of the symbol. Examining the find's context furthers this interpretation of the symbol, as the nymphaeum features a basin that was later

[18] Underwood (2015), 405.
[19] Stewart (1999), 182. As an aside, Stewart presents a wall painting from a hypogeum in Rome (beneath the Via Paisiello), which features the destruction of a nude male statue. With the surrounding wall paintings featuring scenes from early Christian art (such as Jonah, the Good Shepherd, etc.), this is a scene of Christians toppling a 'pagan' statue. However, as Stewart adds, if it were not for the context in which it is found, this could be a visual representation of a *damnatio memoria* (see Stewart 1999: 173-176). Prusac (2014: 52) notes that Christian iconoclasm seems to have been done by smaller groups of people, through such means as graffiti. The inscription from Laodicea might be an example of such vandalism.
[20] See, for example, *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.18. See also Leone (2013), 58. As Watts (2015: 49-50) rightly points out, temples – without the tools we have today – would have been very difficult and time-consuming to de-construct.
[21] *ICG* 940. The inscription reads: προφητείας | Λ(ουκίου) Ἀντωνίου | Ζήνωνος | Αὐρηλια|νοῦ.
[22] The entry in the *ICG* mentions that the symbol was added sometime after the fourth century. The paint has since faded.

enclosed and reused for Christian practices.[23] The symbol was probably painted over the cult inscription sometime after Christianity had become popular in Laodicea. It is difficult to determine when the symbol would have been added as primary sources indicate that Christians were already present in Laodicea in the first century CE. The apostle Paul talks about the city a few times in one of his letters, and Ignatius of Antioch (50-106 CE) mentions the Christians settled there.[24] Furthermore, in the second century CE, a council was held in the city to discuss the dissenting views of the various Christian factions.[25] Because of the uncertainty surrounding when the symbol was added, the cult inscription is not reliable evidence for the Christian use of the chi-rho in the first century CE. Nevertheless, this example demonstrates that we need to exercise caution when dating inscriptions, as modifications – such as the addition of a chi-rho or tau-rho – could have been made later. This inscription also provides evidence for the apotropaic function of the symbol – a line of inquiry that will be explored in greater detail in the next chapter – as I propose that someone added the graffiti to nullify the power of the cult of Apollo.

In summary, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a funerary inscription from the first three centuries CE is Christian or not. It is not necessarily that there are ambiguities between Christian and non-Christian epitaphs in the first three centuries CE, as Christians had not yet developed their own funerary vocabulary. Even when the religion began to grow, Christians borrowed much of their funerary epigraphic habits – including their repertory of symbols – from 'pagan' precedents. The similarities between the epigraphic practices of 'pagans,' Christians, and Jews complicate the identification of the deceased's (or their relatives')

[23] Boddens Hosang (2010), 78, fn. 5.
[24] Boddens Hosang (2010), 85. Laodicea is mentioned in Paul's letter to the Colossians (2:1; 4:13-16) and by Ignatius of Antioch (*Ep. ad Hero.* 9).
[25] Boddens Hosang (2010), 86. For a complete description of the development of Christianity in Laodicea and the surrounding regions in Phrygia, see Boddens Hossang 2010: 85-88.

religious beliefs. When symbols began to be used in the fourth century CE, Christian epitaphs became more overt, but complications and confusions about the intended meaning behind the symbols remain. The rest of this chapter will focus on how the chi-rho and tau-rho were used in funerary and non-funerary inscriptions.

6.2 EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE OF THE CHI-RHO

Appendix B is a complete list of the inscriptions from the fourth and early fifth centuries CE used as the primary evidence for this chapter. One hundred and eighty-six (83.04%) of the 224 inscriptions collected that form the core data sample for this chapter feature a chi-rho. As indicated by the table in Appendix B, most of the inscriptions with a chi-rho are epitaphs. However, before discussing these funerary inscriptions, several other types of inscriptions – found on a wide variety of objects such as milestones, gold currency bars, and plaques – will be examined. Although the types of objects discussed in the following section vary greatly, as we will see, they have a common thread of meaning running through them: a connection to the imperial family.

6.2.1 The Chi-rho in Non-Funerary Inscriptions

There are 23 (12.37% of the 186) datable non-funerary inscriptions with a chi-rho. Some of the earliest fourth-century evidence for chi-rhos in inscriptions is not found in funerary contexts but rather on milestones from North Africa. According to *L'Année Epigraphique*, an inscription from Cuicul (modern Djemila, Algeria) dates between October of 312 CE (the death of Maxentius) and April of 313 CE (the death of Maximinus Daia). It reads:

> *D(omino) n(ostro) | Fl(auio) Val(erio) Constantino inu(icto) p(io) f(elici) Aug(usto), D(omino) | [n(ostro) Gal(erio) Val(erio) Maxim]ino p(io) f(elici) Aug(usto), D(omino) | n(ostro) Val(erio) Licin(iano) Licinio [p(io) f(elici) Aug(usto)]*

> For our Lord, Flavius Valerius Constantinus, unconquered, pious, blessed Augustus; For our Lord Galerius Valerius Maximinus, pious, blessed Augustus; For our Lord Valerius Lacinianus Licinius, pious, blessed Augustus
>
> *AE* 2000, 1799

There are two other milestones from North Africa that attest to the use of the chi-rho early during Constantine's reign. A milestone found at Beni Fouda, Algeria (possibly ancient Novariciacan) very precisely dates to the beginning of 313 CE. It bears the inscription:

> *DD(ominis) nn(ostris) | IImmpp(eratoribus) | Cons|tanti|no [et Gal(erio) | Val(erio)]] | Max]imino | [pp(iis) ff(elicibus)] Au|gg(ustis) pp(erpetuis) m(ille) p(assum) [I]*
>
> For our Lords, the emperors Constantinus [and Galerius Valerius] Maximus, [pious, blessed,] perpetual Augusti. Mile 1
>
> *AE* 2000, 1801

Maximinus Daia's name in the inscription dates the milestone precisely between January, when he became Constantine's co-consul, and April, when Licinius replaced him as consul.[26] Since this milestone is very similar to the one from Cuicul, it is probable that the one from Cuicul also dates to the early months of 313 CE when Maximinus Daia was first made Constantine's co-consul. However, modifications were later made to the milestone from Cuicul since Licinius' name was added to the inscription when Maximinus Daia's was erased.

A third milestone, found on the road from Cuicul to Lambaesis (modern Lambèse), is also quite akin to the two previously discussed (see **Figure 6.1**). Here, it is Licinius' name that has been removed:

> *D(omino) n(ostro) Imp(eratori) Cae(sari) | Fla(vio) Vale(rio) | Consta(n)ti|no in(victo) pio | fe(lici) Aug(usto) | et [[Licinio| Liciniano | nob(ilissimo) Caes(ari)]]*
>
> For our Lord, emperor Caesar Flavius Valerius Constantine, unconquered, pious, blessed, Augustus and Licinius Licinianus, most noble Caesar
>
> *AE* 1992, 1885

[26] Lenski (2016), 8.

As with the previous inscription, the inclusion of Licinius' name dates the inscription between 319 CE, when he became Constantine's co-consul, and 324 CE, after his defeat. Cooley convincingly argues that the milestone dates to 319 CE, when the two men became co-consuls, and states that the chi-rho monogram was likely a part of the original dedication and not an addition of 324 CE when Licinius' name was erased.[27] Licinius' name and title were replaced with *bono rei p(ublicae).*[28] We saw this formula before in Chapter 3 when it was added alongside the chi-rho symbol to the back of the milestone marker erected during the reign of Caracalla. I believe that the similarities between the two milestones lend credence to the hypothesis that the chi-rho was a later addition to the inscription of 216 CE (*CIL VIII* 10306), conceivably sometime during the reign of Constantine. Since the chi-rho on the inscription on the road from Cuicul to Lambaesis appears near the top left of the milestone, Salama proposes that it announces the emperor's name, and therefore it should be considered the personal sign of

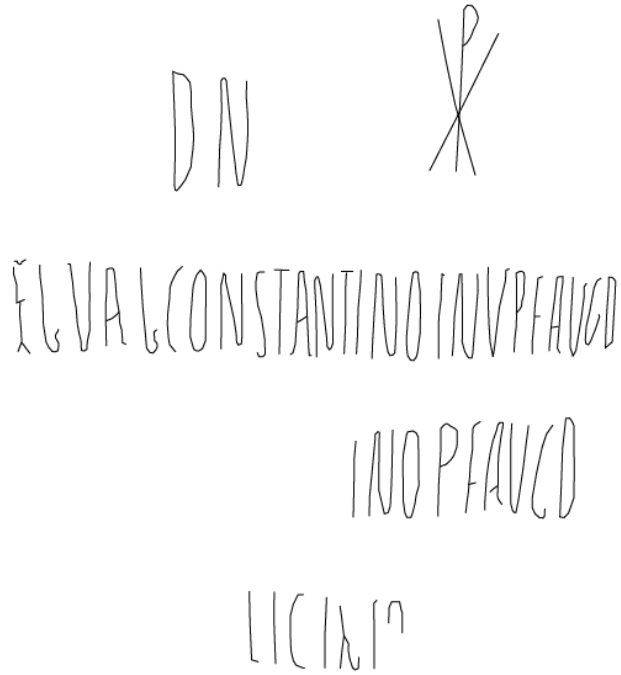

Figure 6.1 An inscription on a milestone found on the road between Cuicul (Djemila) to Lambaesis. The inscription mentions the emperors Constantine I and Licinius. A chi-rho appears on the top right. ca. 319 – 324 CE.
Drawn by author (based on Salama 1998: 154)

[27] Cooley (2012), 244. She says that the engraving style matches that of the original inscription.
[28] Cooley (2012), 244.

Constantine.[29] Indeed, the milestones discussed so far indicate a direct connection between the chi-rho and Constantine. They also demonstrate the early use of the symbol on milestones from North Africa, made more remarkable as Constantine never travelled to North Africa.[30] Therefore, it is difficult to determine the significance – if any – between the chi-rho and the roads upon which these milestones were placed.

Nine more milestones from North Africa – all found in modern Algeria – feature the chi-rho, although most of them cannot be as precisely dated as the ones discussed thus far. One example, from Equizetum (modern Ouled Agla, Algeria), dates to sometime after the death of Constantine's son Crispus in 326 CE, but before 333 CE.[31] A second example, from Nattabutes (modern Ain Temlûka, Algeria), was made sometime during the reigns of Constantine I or his son, Constantine II.[32] Both inscriptions use the same *BRPN* formula we have already encountered, further confirming the connection between this particular epigraphic formula, the chi-rho, and the Constantinian dynasty. Birley, who studied the *BRPN* formula in-depth, demonstrates that it became common in the fourth century, with the earliest examples dating to the time of Constantine I.[33] However, it is important to note that a chi-rho does not always

[29] Salama (1998), 155-157.
[30] Van Dam (2011), 236.
[31] *CIL VIII* 20607. The inscription reads: *DDD(ominorum) ☧ nnn(ostrorum) | Fl(avi) Constan|<i> ni maximi sem|per Aug(usti) et Fl(avi) | Clau(di) Constanti\[ni] iun(ioris) et | F(lavi) Constanti{o} no|bb(ilissimorum) C(a)ess(arum) bono reip(ublicae) | nato(rum)*. See also Grünewald 1990: no. 93.
[32] *CIL VIII* 4824 = 22272. The inscription is: *B(ono) r(eipublicae) n(atus) | ddd(ominis) nnn(nostris) Co|nstant|ino Aug(usto).* As indicated by Tantillo (2017: 135, see footnote 18), it is impossible to tell if the inscription indicates Constantine I and two of his Caesars (thus dating between the years 326-333) or to Constantine II and his two brothers when they took over the imperial rule.
[33] Birley (1958), 90. Birley wonders whether the formula might have come into existence during the reign of Diocletian since when it is found on one of the first datable instances that we have under Constantine I, it is already used as an abbreviation. Chastagnol (2008: 17) also states that the *BPRN* formula began to be used during the reign of the tetrarchs and gradually fades out of use during the fourth century. For a more recent discussion on the *BPRN* formula and its particular connection to the Constantinian dynasty, see Ferris (2021: 11-12).

accompany the abbreviation *BRPN* in inscriptions.[34] The specific combination of the formula and the symbol is unique to North African milestones.

Two milestones have also been found at Tigava (modern El-Kherba, Algeria).[35] Both of the inscriptions date to later in Constantine's reign after he had elevated his sons to the position of Caesar.[36] Even after Constantine's death, the chi-rho continued to be engraved on milestones in North Africa, although its use began to peter out. Two milestones date to the rule of Constantine's son, Constantius II. The first, from Tipasa (modern Tipaza, Algeria), is heavily damaged but can still be dated between 337 and 361 CE.[37] The second milestone is from Sidi-Fredj, Algeria (possibly ancient Obori). It dates between 350 and 353 CE and reads:

> *DD(ominis) nn(ostris) | Constantio | et Magnentio | semper Augg(ustis) b(o)n(o) | r(ei) p(ublicae) natis | m(ilia passuum) IIII*
>
> For our Lords Constantius and Magnentius, always Augusti, the ones born for the good of the state. 4 miles
>
> *CIL VIII* 22552 = *ILCV* 9

Since Constans' name has been erased from the inscription and replaced with Magnentius, I believe the inscription likely dates to before 350 CE when Constans was killed.[38] There remains a direct association with the chi-rho on North African milestones and the Constantinian dynasty.

---

[34] Some examples include *CIL VIII* 10447*; CIL IX* 5958; *CIL IX* 5434; *CIL V* 8030; and *CIL V* 8037. *CIL IX* 5434 is an inscription on a milestone from Paestum made during the Constantinian period, and it does not feature a chi-rho.

[35] There is a third milestone from Tigava, dating to 337 CE, that might have had a chi-rho on it, but the top of the milestone has been destroyed (*AE* 2006, 1814b). The remaining inscription reads: *[D(omini) n(ostri) Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) | Constantini] | Maxi[mi, Aug(usti) uic|tori]s ac triumfatori|s semper Aug(usti) | [[Consta[ntino Iun(iori)]]], | Constantio et Flauio | Iulio [Constanti] | Augustis P(iis) F(elicibus) filio|rum pientissi[morum] | eius bono r(ei) p|[ublicae] natis | [---]*. However, since the use of a chi-rho in the inscription is uncertain, I have omitted it from my dataset.

[36] *AE* 2006, 1815 and *CIL VIII* 22578 = *ILCV* 7b. However, it should be noted that the exact date of the latter inscription is given in neither the *CIL* nor the *ILCV*. Nevertheless, a Christian monogram accompanied by *DDD(ominis) nnn(ostris)* is found on the other side of the stone, indicating that the milestone was created sometime between 337 (the death of Constantine) and 340 (the death of Constantine II). In fact, Diehl (1970: 3) suggests that the unreadable portion of the inscription should be supplied with D[DD nnn]. Tantillo (1997: 258) also mentions that the inscription was made under Constantine II.

[37] *CIL VIII* 22555 = *ILCV* 10. The inscription reads in part: *D(ominus) n(oster) Imp(erator) […] | Constan|tiius pius f(elix) | invictus [Augustus] | […]vom[…] | […]iu[…]o[…]*.

[38] For the removal of Constans name from the inscription, see Omissi (2018: 36, fn. 59).

In addition, we once again have the symbol appearing in an inscription with the formula *BRPN*, only this time it is connected with Constantius II rather than his father.

The final two milestones with a chi-rho in my dataset are datable to the early years of the reigns of Valentinian I and Valens. The chi-rho is located above the rest of the inscription on both of them. The first, found in Rusguniae (modern Cape Matifou, Algeria), reads:

> *DD(ominis) nn(ostris) | Valen|tiniano | et Valenti | piis felicibus | semper Augg(usti) | pl[…]orn | b(ono) r(ei) p(ublicae) n(atis)*
>
> For our Lords Valentinius and Valens, pious, blessed, always Augusti,
> […damaged…], the ones born for the good of the state
>
> *CIL VIII* 22551 = *ILCV* 12

As with the inscriptions from the Constantinian dynasty, this milestone uses the familiar *BRPN* formula. The second milestone, from Tipasa, is comparable but does not use the *BRPN* formula.[39] Since there are no other similarly inscribed milestones datable to a period beyond this, the use of the chi-rho and the *BRPN* formula in these inscriptions may have been remnants of an earlier practice from the time of the Constantinian dynasty. As with the earlier inscriptions, the use of the chi-rho in the context of these early inscriptions of Valentinian I and Valens appears to have no overt Christian meaning. Instead, it is employed as a symbol of imperial authority.

So far, we have mainly explored the chi-rho on milestones from North Africa. There are several other instances of the use of the symbol in other types of non-funerary contexts during the fourth century, such as two *mensae martyrum* (martyr tables) from North Africa.[40] The first table, found at Médiouna, Algeria (ancient name unknown), dates to 329 CE (see **Figure 6.2**). The inscription is a dedication by two fathers to their martyred children and reads:

[39] *CIL VIII* 22556 = *ILCV* 13. The inscription is *DD(ominis) nn(ostris) | Imp(eratores) <Caes(are)s> | Va<l>enti|niano et | Valenti | Augg(ustis) | m(ilia) p(assuum) II.*
[40] For the importance of martyrdom in North Africa, see Kalinowski (2017: 125).

memoriae Enagi et [Sexti K(a)l(endas) A(u)<g>(usta)s]
memoria beatissimo|rum martyrum id est| Rogati Matenii Nass|ei Maximae quem Pri|mosus Cambus genito|res dedicaverunt pas|si XII Kal(endas) nov(e)m(bres) CCXC prov(inciae)

For the memory of Enagius [and Sextus on the Kalends of August].
It is in the memory of the most blessed martyrs: Rogatus, Matenius, Nasseus and Maxima, for whom Primosus and Cambus, their parents, dedicated this. They died on the 12th day before the Kalends of November, in the provincial year 290.[41]

CIL VIII 21517 = *ILCV* 2071

These *mensae martyrum* are a trait of North African *ex-voti* (offerings to the saints), and it seems that some of them were associated with actual burials and feasting.[42] On this particular table, the 'chi-rho' is overtly connected with the Christian religion, placed alongside the names of Christian apostles and saints. If it were indeed a chi-rho, it would be a very early fourth-century example of the use of the symbol in an unequivocal Christian religious context. However, although both the *CIL* and the *ILCV* depict a slightly skewed chi-rho with an extra crossbar,[43] on closer examination of the object itself, it appears that

Figure 6.2 A *mensa martyrum* (*CIL VIII* 21517 = *ILCV* 2071) from Médiouna, Mauretania Tingitana (modern Morocco). The inscription is a dedication of two fathers to their martyred children. A tau-rho on its side appears in the last line of the inscription. 329 CE. Monceaux (1908), no. 328. Image in public domain.

[41] Demaeght (1895: 65) influenced my translation of this inscription. The date of 290 found in the inscription is the provincial date, which converts to 329 CE. Provincial years were used in Mauretania to mark the province's incorporation into the Roman Empire. For more information on the use of provincial rather than consular dating, see Conant (2015: 149-151). These martyrs are not known apart from this table (see Mullen 2004: 324).
[42] Cooley (2012), 246. Meals for the poor would also be given on these tables.
[43] The symbol is called a 'chrisme' by Duval (1982: 403-405). This verbiage is extremely problematic for any systematic study of the chi-rho and the tau-rho. It is impossible to tell to which symbol Duval is referring. Although she calls the tau-rho a 'croix latine' (see page 140) and a 'croix monogrammatique' (see page 130), elsewhere she refers to chi-rho, a cross, and a tau-rho all as 'croix' (see page 152). Therefore it is difficult to tell how, or even if, she differentiates the symbols.

the engraved symbol is a tau-rho. Therefore, this inscription does not provide evidence for the early use of the chi-rho in a Christian context. Instead, it is further evidence – building upon the evidence presented in Chapter 3 – of the early use of the tau-rho in Christian contexts.

Figure 6.3 A *mensa martyrum* (*CIL VIII 20600)* from Tixter, Numidia Cirtensis (modern Algeria). A chi-rho appears in a circle in the middle of the inscription. 359 CE.
© 2011 Musée du Louvre / Thierry Ollivier (no. MNC 1287)

A second dedication of a martyrum comes from Tixter (modern Kherbet Oum el-Ahdam, Algeria) and dates to 359 CE, a generation after the one found at Médiouna (see **Figure 6.3**). It reads:

> *Memori|a sa(n)cta| de lignu (sic) crucis, | de ter(r)a promis(si)onis ube (sic) natus est C(h)ristus,| apostoli Petri et Pauli. nomi|na marturu(m) Datiani Dona|tiani C(y)priani Nemes(i)ani | [C]itini et Victo|[r]ia[e]s. an(n)o privi[nciae tr]ecent(esimo) viges(imo)*

> Holy memorial of the apostles Peter and Paul, from the wood of the cross, from the land of promise where Christ was born. The names of the martyrs: Datianus, Donatianus, Cyprian, Nemesianus, Citinus, and Victoria. In the provincial year 320.[44]
>
> *CIL VIII* 20600

This martyr table must have stood at the site where relics of the cross were deposited.[45] Unlike the table mentioned in the previous paragraph, a chi-rho (not a tau-rho) appears in the centre of the table. The symbol appears within a circle and is separated from the rest of the inscription by the words *memoria sancta*. Of the martyrs mentioned in the inscription, the one with the most recognizable name is Saint Cyprian, who had been the bishop of Carthage before he was beheaded in 258 CE.[46] In contrast to the milestones described earlier in this chapter, these martyr dedications were not associated with the imperial family. In contrast, Cooley mentions that when the names of the dedicators are included, they are frequently those of laypeople.[47] As we will see, the incorporation of the tau-rho and chi-rho on these tables is more similar to private funerary inscriptions than the imperial public milestones previously discussed.

Thus far, I have only discussed non-funerary evidence of the chi-rho in North Africa because it provides the earliest and most significant portion of the datable evidence: 12 of 23 inscriptions. Although my sample size is problematic because it is small, it nevertheless demonstrates the early use of the chi-rho in non-funerary contexts in this part of the empire. Having finished the study of milestones and *mensae martyrum*, we will now turn to a chronological examination of the evidence from the rest of the Roman Empire.

[44] My translation is influenced by Cooley's (2012: 246). It is important to note that the provincial date of 320 found on the inscription converts to 359 CE.
[45] Lander (2016), 97.
[46] Lanzi & Lanzi (2004), 80-81.
[47] Cooley (2012), 246.

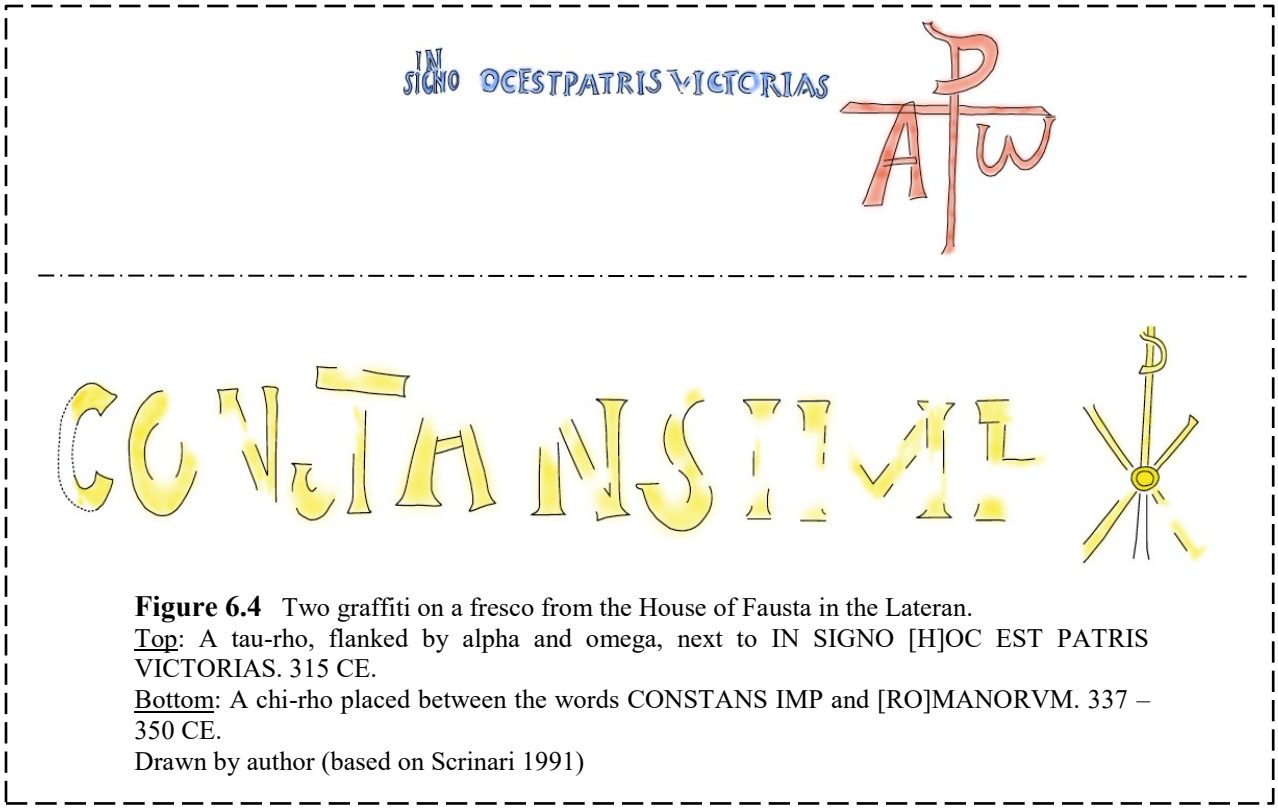

Figure 6.4 Two graffiti on a fresco from the House of Fausta in the Lateran.
Top: A tau-rho, flanked by alpha and omega, next to IN SIGNO [H]OC EST PATRIS VICTORIAS. 315 CE.
Bottom: A chi-rho placed between the words CONSTANS IMP and [RO]MANORVM. 337 – 350 CE.
Drawn by author (based on Scrinari 1991)

Archaeologists found several datable inscriptions as a part of a mural featuring hippocampi at the so-called *domus Faustae* (house of Fausta, the wife of Constantine I), which was purportedly a part of the Lateran Palace complex in Rome (see also Chapter 3).[48] One of the inscriptions in the fresco features a chi-rho placed between the words *CONSTANS IMP* and *[RO]MANORUM* and therefore must date sometime between 337 and 350 CE (see **Figure 6.4**).[49] This mural, which also features a tau-rho, will be discussed in further detail below (see section 6.3.1). The importance of this inscription cannot be understated, for it is an example of the use of the chi-rho in an imperial residence owned by the Constantinian family that provides an idea of how the imperial court employed the symbol. A gold ring dating to the same period (337 – 350

[48] Scrinari (1991), 164. I have already briefly discussed this wall-painting in Chapter 3. See also Liverani (2020: 18-19), who questions the identification of the empress as the owner of the *domus Faustae* rather than a private citizen named Fausta. While his proposal is interesting, he lacks proof to support his claims.
[49] Scrinari (1991), 166. Bardill (2012: 164) also discusses the fresco in Chapter 5 of his book, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age,* which explores the solar symbolism of the chi-rho.

CE) further exemplifies the connection between the chi-rho and the imperial family. The ring, which has a chi-rho engraved alongside the words *Fidem D(omino) N(ostro) Constanti Augusto*, was likely an imperial gift given to a military or imperial court member.[50] This ring would have been a sign of the wearer's loyalty to the emperor, Constans, and the chi-rho was a visual symbol of their allegiance to the Constantinian dynasty.

There are three honorific inscriptions with a chi-rho that might have served the same purpose as the gold ring: a proclamation of the honouree's association with the imperial court. The first datable example is a bronze tablet from Paestum, Italy. The inscription, which dates to 347 CE, records the patronage of Aquilius Nestorius and Aquilius Aper, a father and son.[51] The citizens of Paestum dedicated it because of the civic works the Aquilii sponsored in the town.

> *Vulcaciq (sic) Rufino et Fl(auio) Eusebio conss(ulibus), Kalendis | Augustis. | Cum cibes frequentes coloniae Paestanorum in uno | adfuissent, consilioque habito, berba fecerunt: cum | tot tantaque beneficia sblendentia (sic) de domo Aquilini Nes|tori(i), probi adulescentis, descendant, quibus colonia nos|tra exornata unicuique nobis cibibus in oculis adque | animis sint praecipuae cum unusquisque ciuium se con|berterit opera ab his extructa oculis eorum occurrant; | sic faciem cibitatis honestam reddant, utinam qui tantus | populus esset status ut tantis muneribus domus eorum | aliis quoque gloriosis muneribus remunerandus esset; | fateri beneficia eius, munera populi, intebimque (sic) contentos | esse: hoc munere flaminis gratulit (populus) quod, publica uoce, | et offerendum etiam cibes cupierant. Cum Aquilius Nesto|rius, contemplatione mutui honoris, nos municipes sua | dignatione unice diligat sitque similem nobis adfec|tionem etiam Aquilius Aper, filius efu(s) (sic), praebiturus. | Placere cibibus patronatus cibitatis eidem offerri, | ut, fulti patrocinio eorum, populus noster plus ho|noris consecutus quam optulisset uideatur. | Quod fieri placere de ea re ita censuerunt. | Feliciter!*
>
> During the consulship of Vulcacius Rufinus and Flavius Eusebius, on the Kalends of August. The citizens of the *colonia* of Paestum convened in a fully attended assembly, held a debate and passed the following resolution. Because there have accrued to us from the house of Aquilius Nestorius, this upright gentleman, such numerous, great and splendid benefactions, with which our *colonia* has been adorned

[50] *AE* 2004, 1927. Unfortunately, the provenance of the ring is not known. For more information on '*fidem*' rings, see Hebblewhite (2017: 97-98) and Swift (2017: 173-179). In her study of Roman artefacts, Swift concludes that many masculine ring motifs served as military talisman. The chi-rho, with its military and apotropaic signification, adds to this conclusion.
[51] *AE* 1990, no. 211.

> and which are visible to the eyes and minds of our citizens, especially when each citizen looks about him and buildings raised by them meet their gaze, and thus they have made glorious the appearance of our city, wherefore the full(?) citizen body (*populus*) has resolved that a return should be made to them for the great services rendered by their house, and their other outstanding services too; that they acknowledge his benefactions as public services to the *populus* and are pleased with them. (The citizen body) gratefully offers him the position of *flamen*, because, by public acclamation, the citizens desire that he should be given that additional honour. Since Aquilius Nestorius, in consideration of honours given and received, loved us, his fellow-citizens, with an unparalleled affection, and his son, Aquilius Aper, will offer us the same affection, the citizens formally resolve to confer on him the patronage of the city, so that, by relying on the protection of both, our people may be seen to receive greater honour than we have offered. The resolution on this matter was passed by formal vote. Congratulations![52]
>
> *AE* 1990, 211

At the top of the inscription, a pediment has a chi-rho within a wreath. It is flanked on either side by two six-sided stars and doves. Despite the Christian connotation of the chi-rho, the citizens praise Nestorius for his services and award him the office of *flamen*, the priest of the imperial cult.[53] Since Christians were forbidden from holding the office of *flamen* at this time,[54] the chi-rho on the tablet is even more intriguing. As we will see in Chapter 7, the chi-rho, a supposed Christian symbol, could frequently be found with 'pagan' symbolism, especially in the first half of the fourth century.

The second honorific inscription comes from Ostia and dates to 386 CE. It states:

> *Fl(avio) Honorio n(obilissimo) p(uero) et Fl(avio) | Eubodio conss(ulibus) Faviis | Adeodato cent(urioni) coh(ortis) VII | et Cri[spin?]o coh(ortis) II a civ[ita]t(e) |..... Ostia on[...]|[....]*[55]
>
> During the consulships of Flavius Honorius, a very noble boy, and Flavius Eubodius: For Fabius Adeodatus, from the town of Ostia, who was a centurion in the 7th cohort, and Fabius Crispinus, who was a centurion in the 2nd cohort …
>
> *CIL XIV* 231 = *ILCV* 398

[52] This translation comes from Harries (2003), 139-140.
[53] Cooley (2012), 245; and Lenski (2016), 222.
[54] Lenski (2016), 222.
[55] Torres (2008: 105) believes that the inscription was set up by a certain Onesimus, his name having been broken off at the end of the inscription.

The chi-rho appears within the text of the inscription itself, as it did on the gold ring discussed above. However, unlike with the building dedication of Vasconius that we will see below, the chi-rho here is not being used in place of a word (such as Christ), but rather it is still a freestanding symbol. The use of the chi-rho in this way leads to several questions, such as: whether or not the reader is supposed to infer that the centurions mentioned in the inscription are Christian; if, either instead of or in addition to, the symbol reflects the religion of the emperor Honorius and consul Eubodius; or if the chi-rho signifies the imperial family, without any religious connotations intended. The answers to these questions are difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, the use of the symbol in a military context is not surprising, harkening back to how the symbol was initially employed on coins at the start of the fourth century (see Chapters 5 and 7).

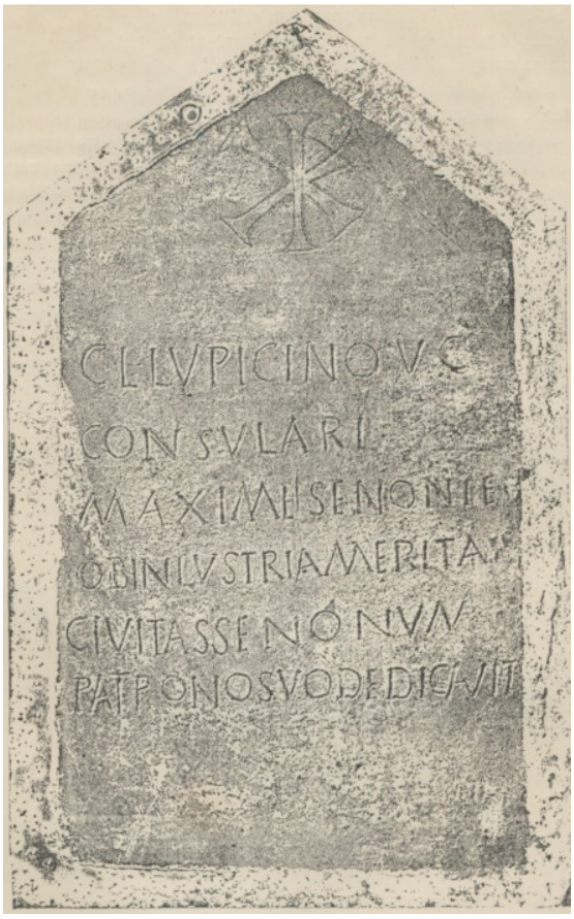

Figure 6.5 An honorific inscription on a bronze plaque from Agginum (modern Agen, France). Dedicated to the governor of the province, Claudius Lupicinus, a chi-rho appears above the inscription. 383 – 388 CE.
Magen & Tholin (1881), 85. Image in public domain

A third honorific inscription appears on a series of bronze plaques found at Agginum (modern Agen, France) (see **Figure 6.5**).[56] Archaeologists found the plaques, dated between 383 and 388 CE, at the villa of Claudius

[56] *CIL XIII* 921a-c = *ILCV* 921.

Lupicinus in Aquitania, who was named governor of the province of Senonia sometime during these years.[57] The citizens of Senonia (Sens, France), Autessiodurum (Auxerre, France), and Aurelianum (Orléans, France) gifted them to him and above the inscription on each of the three plaques is a chi-rho, flanked by alpha and omega, within a circle. Since these plaques were given to Claudius Lupicinus in recognition of his patronage – for un-specified services – as governor of the three towns, they have no explicit Christian implications, aside from the chi-rho flanked by alpha and omega. By this late date in the fourth century, it is impossible to divorce the Christian symbolism of the chi-rho, especially flanked by the alpha and omega, even in a non-religious context such as these plaques.

The following two inscriptions directly mention Christ and place the chi-rho more firmly in a Christian context. These two building inscriptions are from the last quarter of the fourth century. The first, which dates to 377 CE, comes from Sedunum (modern Sion, Switzerland). The inscription – found in the town's senate (*curia*) – refers to the *praetor* Pontius, who dedicated a Church to the town:

> *deuotione uigens | augustas Pontius aedis | restituit praetor | longe praestantius illis quae priscae steterant. | talis, res publica, qu<a>ere*[58] *(sic). D(omino) n(ostro) Gratiano Aug(usto) IIII et Mer(obaude) co(n)s(ulibus)| Pontius Asclepiodotus u(ir) p(erfectissimus) p(raetor) d(e)d(dicauit)*
>
> The praetor Pontius, being strong in prayer, restored the venerable parts of the Church[59] far more grandly than those parts that had stood earlier. Republic, seek such things! Pontius Asclepiodotus, a most distinguished man and praetor, dedicated it when our lord Gratian, Augustus (for the fourth time), and Merobaudes were consuls.
>
> *CIL XII* 138 = *ILCV* 281

[57] Derks (2011), 125 and Sivan (1993), 145. According to Sivan, Claudius Lupicinus was elevated to governor by the usurper Magnus Maximus.
[58] Fridh (1976), 140.
[59] Olcott (1904: 135) mentions that *aedes* can be translated as 'Church' and uses this inscription as one of his examples. For a more recent examination of the word *aedes*, see Foster & McCarthy (2015: 767), who state that when it is used in the singular, *aedes* means 'church', 'temple', or 'chapel.'

If the translation of *aedes* as 'Church' is correct – and the mention of Pontius gaining strength to rebuild the building through prayer seems to suggest it is – then even though this is not a funerary inscription, it still has an ecclesiastical connection. The presence of the alpha and omega, which helps to intensify the chi-rho's semiotic language, further solidifies a Christian interpretation.

The second building inscription, dated to 387 CE, comes from Oretum in the province of Hispania Terraconensis (modern Granátula de Calatrava, Spain). It reads:

> *ex officina Homoni | utere felix Vasconi | in ☧ proc(urante) Tiberiano | factus est horreus (sic) | D(omino) n(ostro) Valentiniano Aug(usto) | ter et Eutropio u(iro) c(larissimo) | cons(ulibus) scrib(ente) Elefanto | [magis]t(ris?) Vi[taliano] et Neb[ridio]*
>
> From the workshop of Homonius. Use and be happy in Christ, Vasconius! Under the management of Tiberianus, a warehouse (*horreum*) was built when our lord Valentinian, Augustus for the third time, and the most illustrious man Eutropius were consuls. Elefantus inscribed it, while Vitalianus and Nebridius were magistrates.[60]
>
> *CIL II* 3222 (6340) = *ILCV* 2243

This inscription is highly significant for studying the application of the chi-rho in inscriptions towards the end of the fourth century. Firstly, the chi-rho is implemented not as a stand-alone symbol – as we have seen in all the inscriptions discussed so far – but as an abbreviation within the text itself that plausibly stands for the word 'Christ.'[61] As we shall see later in this chapter, the use of the chi-rho in this way is exceptional.[62] Indeed, in Chapter 3, I discussed that epigraphists often abbreviated Christ in texts as Xç. Secondly, unlike the 'Church' mentioned in the previous inscription, the storehouse being commemorated here is a civic building.

[60] According to Curchin (2014: 292-293), who provides a good summary of the discussion surrounding this inscription, it is possible that Vitalianus and Nebridius were tax collectors (*exactoribus*) rather than magistrates and that Elefantus was the scribe who recorded the tax collection. See also Arce (2011: 289)

[61] By the end of the fourth century, the chi-rho had likely become more of a 'Christian' symbol – without necessarily losing its connection to the Constantinian dynasty – as we saw in the last Chapter.

[62] There are a few exceptions found in epitaphs, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Nevertheless, the owner Vasconius is told to make good use of it 'in Christ.' This inscription is the first securely datable evidence for inserting a Christian moniker into a purely civic context.

Figure 6.6 A gold currency bar from Sirmium, Pannonia (modern Serbia). A chi-rho appears at the end of the quality stamp of the assayer Lucianus. ca. 367 – 375 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. R1894,1207.1)

There are two more late-fourth-century inscriptions with the chi-rho that I will discuss in this section. The first is a set of gold bars, found in Braşov, Romania (in the ancient region of Dacia).[63] Haverfield dates them between 367 and 375 CE based on the busts of three emperors who appear on one of the gold bars that he identifies as Valentinian I, Valens, and Gratian (see **Figure 6.6**).[64] A chi-rho appears on two of the bars: on one, the symbol follows the inscription *Lucianus | obr(yzi) (prim)i sig(num)*; while on the other, it is found above a seated tyche of the city of Sirmium.[65] These bars were likely a type of currency, and Lucianus was the quality

[63] *AE* 1889, 47 = *CIL III* 8080 = *ILCV* 935.
[64] Haverfield (1889), 186. Although this source is very dated, it still offers one of the more complete descriptions and discussions of these gold bars. For more recent, albeit less thorough, discussions of the gold bars, see Alföldi (1978: 218) and Hobbes (2006: 223).
[65] The figure has been identified as the personification of Sirmium because the letters *SIRM* appear below her. For this identification, see also Haverfield (1889: 186).

assurance assessor, who stamped his name on them to certify their worth.[66] Therefore, they function more like coins than any other inscription discussed in this chapter. For this reason, Kenner posits that the chi-rhos found on these gold bars function as a sort of 'mint-mark,' a way of identifying the years that the bars were made.[67] Since there is no written identification with the three emperors on the bar, they may represent Constantine I's sons.[68] While Haverfield does mention that the emperors might not be the Valentinians, he argues against identifying them as Constantine I's sons without explaining why.[69] Alföldi more convincingly argues that the three emperors – identified as emperors because of the DDD NNN inscription beside their portraits – are Gratian, Theodosius I, and Valentinian II because one of the busts is smaller than the other two.[70] If it were those three emperors, it would mean gold bars date between 379 and 383 CE. Although the exact date they were forged is uncertain – something made even more complicated to assess because the chi-rho was an issue mark on all of the aforementioned emperors' coins – the gold bars provide a non-religious context for the use of the symbol on objects linked with the monetary system. While these gold bars do not contain the same reverse imagery or traditional numismatic issue marks as is found on coins, the chi-rho may have functioned as a further mark of imperial quality assurance.

The final inscription from a non-funerary context dates between 392 and 395 CE.[71] Found in Rome on a bronze tag, this is only the third inscription in this section that also includes an alpha and omega:

> *A ☧ Ω | ad basilica(m) apos|toli Pauli et | DDD(ominis) NNN(ostris) | Filicissimi pecor(arii)*

[66] See Alföldi (1978: 218); and Kenner (1888: 11-12).
[67] Kenner (1888), 8-9.
[68] Hobbs (2006: 223) is much more conservative, dating the gold bars between ca. 330 and 378 CE.
[69] Haverfield (1889), 186.
[70] Alföldi (1978), 218.
[71] The inscription dates between the death of Valentinian II and the death of Theodosius I. Papi (2011: 184) gives a general date of the end of the fourth century.

> (The property) of Filicissimus, shepherd to the Basilica of Paul the Apostle, and our three lordships.[72]
>
> *CIL VI* 33895 = *ILCV* 1763 = *ICUR* 4779

Unlike any of the other inscriptions examined thus far, the symbol appears here – flanked by an alpha and omega – on a tag of ownership. Martinez-Fazio states the tag was attached to the collar of a sheepdog owned by the Basilica and kept by the shepherd Filicissimus. The question is why this symbol would appear on a dog's collar. Was the shepherd, Filicissimus, a Christian? Was the symbol placed on the collar because the dog belonged to the Basilica? I consider that the solution lies in the apotropaic function of the symbol, a theory to which I will return in Chapter 7 of this dissertation. In this example, the chi-rho wards away theft and any evil that may befall the dog as property of the Basilica.

The previous examination of non-funerary inscriptions has highlighted some of the underlying complexities of the chi-rho – as an imperial and religious symbol – in the fourth century. **Figure 6.7**, which displays the frequency and spread of the symbol in non-funerary contexts, indicates that while the chi-rho does appear in more places as the century progresses, the few securely datable inscriptions studied in this section demonstrate a preponderance of North African examples. When the symbol first came into use in inscriptions in the first half of the fourth century, such as on the North African milestones, it was often directly linked with the Constantinian dynasty, as it was on coins (see Chapter 5). Later on in the century, however, even in non-funerary contexts, the chi-rho begins to be imbued with more religious significance.

[72] For this translation, see de Rossi (1874: 502-503). Unfortunately, more modern sources on this inscription are scarce. An Italian monograph, *Pietro e Paolo: La storia, il culto, la memoria nei primi secoli* (2000), transcribes the Latin (and therefore translates the inscription) slightly differently. Filippi's (2000: 229, no. 103) entry of the object presents the following: *ad basilica(m) apostoli Pauli et d(ominos) n(ostros tres) Filicissimi pecor(arii) / (Riportami) alla basilica di Paolo apostolo ed ai tre nostril imperatori (proprietary) di Felicissimo pecoraro / (Return me) to the basilica of the apostle Paul and to our three emperors, owner of the shepherd Filicissimus*

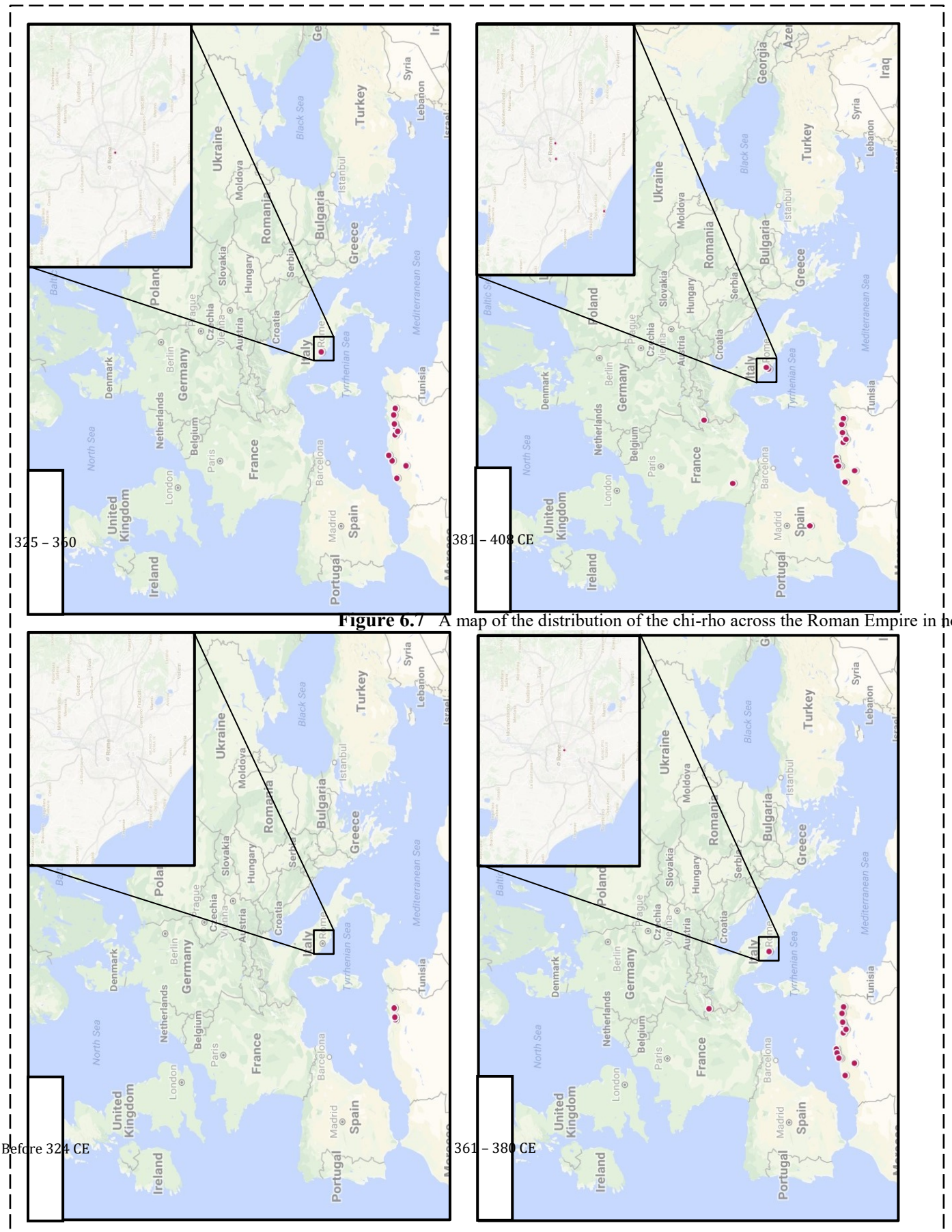

Figure 6.7 A map of the distribution of the chi-rho across the Roman Empire in non-funerary

However, this does not diminish its association with the imperial family or its power as a legitimization tool. When paired with other Christian symbols, such as the alpha and the omega, its intended semiotic function becomes less ambiguous. Even then, as with the example of the sheepdog collar, we have to remain cautious in assigning a purely Christian meaning to the symbol.

6.2.2 The Chi-rho in Funerary Inscriptions

As the pie chart in **Figure 6.8** demonstrates, most inscriptions with a chi-rho are epitaphs, and most of these epitaphs come from Rome. Of the 224 inscriptions collected as the core sample of this database, 163 (72.77%) are funerary inscriptions that feature a chi-rho. Even though, as we have seen in the previous section, there are several examples of the chi-rho in non-funerary inscriptions shortly after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, 141 (86.5%) of the funerary inscriptions with a chi-rho date to the second half of the fourth century.

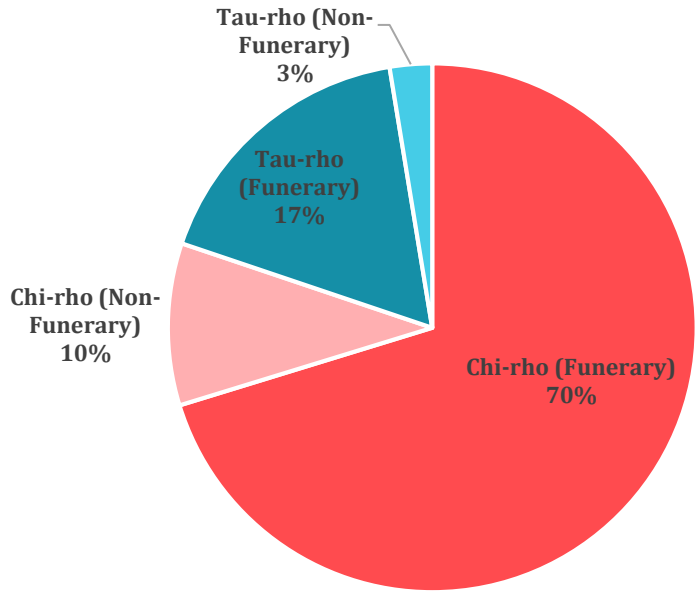

Figure 6.8 A graphic representation of the percentages of use of the chi-rho and tau-rho in funerary and non-funerary inscriptions in the fourth century.

Figure 6.9 A funerary inscription from the cemetery of Cyriaca in Rome (*ILCV* 3257 = *ICUR* 17425). A chi-rho appears at the end of the inscription, separated slightly from the main text. 323 CE.
Drawn by author (based on *EDB online:* 17717)

The first secure use of the chi-rho in a funerary inscription comes from the cemetery of Cyriaca in Rome (see **Figure 6.9**).[73] The beginning of the inscription is damaged, but what remains reads:

> *[…]mp […]tino, qui [ui]|xit ann(os) XXIII, m(enses) VIII, d(ies) XXVII dep(osito) di[e…] | Idus Sept(embres) Seuero et Rufino cons(ulibu)s | fecer(unt) parentes in pace* ☧
>
> […]mp […]tino, who lived 23 years, 8 months, and 27 days was laid to rest on the Ides of September, during the consulship of Severus and Rufinus. His parents made (this) in peace (or, in the peace *of Christ*).
>
> *ILCV* 3257 = *ICUR* 17425

This inscription dates to 323 CE and is typical of a fourth-century Christian epitaph: recording the date of death, using the expression *in pace*, and featuring a chi-rho.[74] The phrase *in pace* is prevalent among Christian epitaphs and can allude to three different sentiments, depending on how it is used.[75] It can refer to eternal rest when it is paired with words like *quiescere* or

[73] An inscription that has been spuriously dated to 318 CE from Velitrae (modern Velletri, Italy) has not been included (*ILCV* 4634A). Although transcribed in the *ILCV* as *bono memorie (sic) | Geneso, qui bixit | annos LXXII, men(ses) IIII, d(ies) XI | L[icinio] Aug[usto] in pace*, Korhonen (2006: 120) believes the final line should read *dep(osito) VI Kal(endas) Aug(ustas) in pace.* Thus, the date given in the *ILCV* is erroneous. As we shall see, adding the alpha and omega to inscriptions with the chi-rho is not securely attested until nearly two decades later. This is further proof against the date of 318 CE.
[74] Handley (2003), 15. See, especially, fn. 63.
[75] Mazzoleni (2015), 454.

dormire; it can refer to the good life the person led when it is joined with the verb *vixit*; or, finally, it can refer to heavenly peace when it is used with the subjunctive of *vivere* and, sometimes, with the genitive *Christi* or a chi-rho. The latter expression appears to be the function of *in pace* in this inscription. However, examining the image itself demonstrates that the symbol's meaning on this inscription is not straightforward. The chi-rho is not directly connected with the phrase *in pace*, as it is on several subsequent inscriptions.[76] Instead, the chi-rho is independent of the rest of the text, appearing at the bottom-right of the inscription, and since it is inscribed in the same colour, style, and font size as the other letters, it is probably not a later addition. I posit that the chi-rho in this instance is not directly related to what is written in the inscription but functions as a self-contained (i.e. freestanding) emblem. Although this interpretation leaves *in pace* without much context, there are other instances where the phrase appears in such a way at the end of a funerary inscription.[77] As with other images on epitaphs, such as doves, dolphins, and gorgons, the chi-rho features here as a decorative image rather than a textual abbreviation.

It is, of course, improbable that this example was the first instance of a chi-rho on a funerary inscription, but it gives us some idea of how quickly the symbol was adopted and how it was employed in this medium. The inscription of 323 CE was made slightly over a decade after Constantine's vision. It is also nearly as long since the symbol was initially minted on coins and – as we have just seen – other imperial inscriptions such as milestones. The symbol's inclusion on funerary inscriptions must have been quite sporadic in the early fourth century, for the

[76] See, for example, *CIL XIII* 299, which dates to 347 CE; *ILCV* 3252B = *ICUR* 8723, which dates to 366 CE; and *ILCV* 2353A = *ICUR* 6031, which dates to 371 CE.
[77] For a few examples, see: *CIL VI* 31998 = *ICUR* 221; *ILCV* 3650 = *ICUR* 479; and *ILCV* 3115a = *ICUR* 733.

subsequent known datable instance of the symbol in a funerary context, to which I will now turn, comes from nearly a decade later.

A marble tablet from the catacombs of Maius in Rome dates to 331 CE. The inscription, which has two chi-rhos and two palm branches, reads as follows:

> *Asellus et Lea Prisco patri benemerenti in pace, | qui bixit (sic) annis LXIIII, mensibus III, | die(bu)s n(umero) XII, | in signo ☧ | d(eposito) Basso et Ablauio (sic) | cons(ulibu)s V K(alendas) Oct(obres)*
>
> Asellus and Lea for their father Priscus, well-deserving in peace, who lived for sixty-four years, three months, twelve days, in the sign of Christ. He was laid to rest on the 5th day before the Kalends of October during the consulship of Bassus and Ablabius.
>
> *ILCV* 1545 = *ICUR* 21597

This inscription is significant, as the chi-rho is an integral part of the inscription itself; it is not on the periphery of the epitaph. It also explicitly calls the chi-rho a sign, harkening back to Lactantius and Eusebius (as referenced in Chapter 4). Furthermore, it is essential to note that Asellus' and Lea's father Priscus is not living *in Christ* (*in* ☧),[78] but <u>*in the sign of Christ*</u> (*in signo* ☧). This nuance is a reminder that the chi-rho is not simply a substitution for the word Christ, but, as we will see in Chapter 7, it is a symbolic representation of Christ. This difference is crucial, as the chi-rho as a symbol includes an apotropaic significance that a monogram does not. It moves beyond the historical figure of Christ and is imbued with all that Christ embodies for his followers, including Christ's magical/miraculous abilities. Adding to its power is the fact

[78] Indeed, the formula '*in* ☧' is found on a couple of later inscriptions, such as *ICUR* 15986, which dates to 348 CE; and *ICUR* 6506, which dates to 388 CE. The '*in* ☧' inscriptions will be explored in more detail later in this chapter (see Ch.6, fn. 162). The sign of Christ is also mentioned in *ICUR* 17389 *([Vic]toru in signo Cristi spiritu*), but even though a chi-rho is used elsewhere on the epitaph, it does not replace the word 'Christ.'

that it is the same symbol that was bestowed upon Constantine I and, thus, *ipso facto* protects the imperial family.

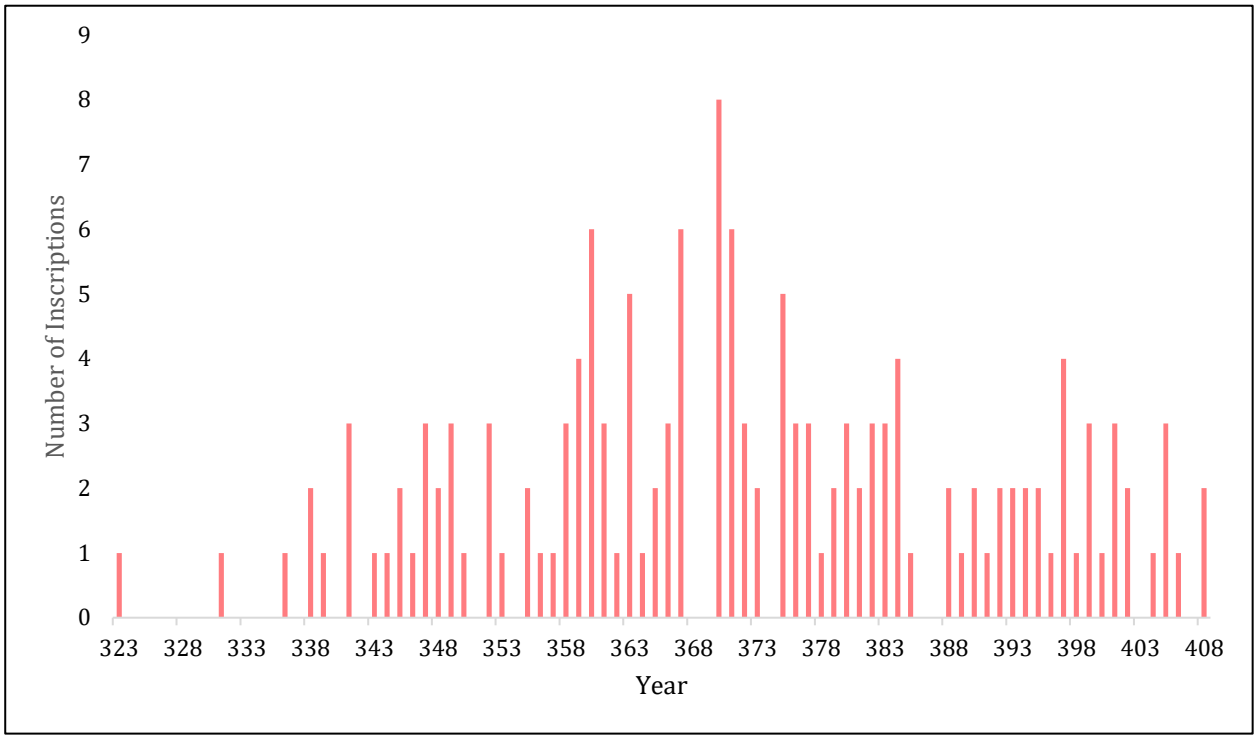

Figure 6.10 A graphic representation of the number of occurrences of the chi-rho in funerary inscriptions throughout the fourth century.

By the middle of the 330s, the chi-rho begins to appear in funerary inscriptions 'regularly,'[79] and it remains a prevalent symbol in these inscriptions throughout the fourth century (see **Figure 6.10**, which graphs the occurrences of the chi-rho throughout this period). The majority of datable funerary inscriptions come from Rome,[80] but by 344 CE, the chi-rho

[79] Although the chi-rho was by no means a regular symbol on funerary inscriptions, occurring on less than one out of ten inscriptions of those Christian inscriptions found in the *ICUR*, by 330 CE the symbol was appearing less sporadically than it had in the decades before.

[80] This list contains only those epitaphs with no other decorative motif other than the chi-rho. In chronological order, see *ILCV* 3252 = *ICUR* 3159 (336 CE); *ILCV* 2816 = *ICUR* 1420 (341 CE); *ILCV* 2999 (341 CE); *ILCV* 2571 (2819) = *ICUR* 8720 (343 CE); *ILCV* 2600 = *ICUR* 20774 (349 CE); *ILCV* 2874 (349 CE); *ILCV* 2941 (352 CE); *ILCV* 3252A = *ICUR* 4241 (352 CE); *ILCV* 3239 = *ICUR* 13299 (353 CE); *ILCV* 4217 (355 CE); *ICUR* 1423 (17437) (358 CE); *ILCV* 2976 = *ICUR* 17438 (358 CE); *ILCV* 3141 = *ICUR* 20779 (358 CE); *ILCV* 4435 (359 CE); *ICUR* 13310 (360 CE); *ICUR* 16968 (360 CE); *ICUR* 20782 (360 CE); *ILCV* 2569 = *ICUR* 6023 (361 CE); *ILCV* 1327 (363 CE); *ILCV* 4410 (363 CE); *ICUR* 21604 (between 365 and 373 CE); *ILCV* 1731 (between 365 and 390

appears in epitaphs from outside the city. The first inscription, from Ravenna, is typical of what would be considered a Christian epitaph at this time: providing the name, age, and date of death of the deceased.[81] From 344 CE onwards, funerary inscriptions with the chi-rho began to appear throughout the Roman Empire.[82] **Figure 6.11** details where archaeologists have found the securely datable epitaphs with chi-rhos in the empire. As is evident, the highest concentration remains in Italy, but by the beginning of Theodosius I's rule, the chi-rho starts to appear on tombstones further afield, especially in North Africa. I explore the concentration of the chi-rho in inscriptions across the empire in further detail below.

As the chi-rho became more common in funerary inscriptions, it also began to appear in conjunction with different types of motifs, to which I will now turn. We have already seen that the inscription from 331 CE (described above) features palm branches. From the inscriptions compiled in my dataset (see Appendix B), palm branches appear with chi-rhos 6.75% (11 inscriptions) of the time.[83] Oftentimes birds, in particular doves, hold the palm branches.

CE); *ICUR* 6028 (367 CE); *ILCV* 3253 = *ICUR* 9563 (367 CE); *ILCV* 1297 = *ICUR* 12421 (370 CE); *ILCV* 2603A = *ICUR* 4501 (370 CE); *ILCV* 2945 (370 CE); *ILCV* 4146 = *ICUR* 15769 (370 CE); *ICUR* 3180 (370 CE); *ICUR* 17462 (370 or 373 CE); *ILCV* 4258 = *ICUR* 3181 (371 CE); *CIL X* 4488 (371 CE); *ICUR* 23412 (372 CE); *ICUR* 23413 (372 CE); *ILCV* 1328 = *ICUR* 9568 (376 CE); *ILCV* 4400 = *ICUR* 17471 (377 CE); *ICUR* 23416 (377 CE); *ICUR* 3187 (377 ? CE); *ILCV* 3574 = *ICUR* 19959 (380 CE); *ILCV* 2564 = *ICUR* 20603 (382 CE); *ILCV* 3287A (384 or 388 CE); *ICUR* 20810 (396 CE); *ILCV* 3091A = *ICUR* 12423 (397 CE); *ILCV* 3058 (398 CE); *ICUR* 4054 (5717) (402 CE); *ICUR* 4852 (404 or 407 or 409 or 412 CE); and *ICUR* 19981 (405 CE).

[81] *ILCV* 2817 = *ICUR* 21600.

[82] For example, see *ILCV* 1470 (from Tingi); *ILCV* 2602 = *ICUR* 3126 (from Velitrae); *CIL XIII* 299 (from Lugdunum); *CIL VIII* 20301 = *ILCV* 1684 (from Satafis); *ILCV* 2940A = *ICUR* 2596 (from Anagnia); *CIL X* 1191 = *ILCV* 3352 (from Atripalda); *ILCV* 4368 = *ICUR* 2979 (from Ravenna); *ILCV* 1327A = *ICUR* 2695 (from Cusercoli); *CIL X* 4480 (from Capua); *CIL VIII* 21767 = *ILCV* 2859 (from Altava); *CIL V* 6243 = *ILCV* 4398 (from Mediolanium); and *CIL XI* 2872 = *ILCV* 2258 (from Volsinii).

[83] In chronological order, see *ILCV* 1545 = *ICUR* 21597 (331 CE); *ICUR* (338 CE); *CIL XI* 3054 (359 CE); *ICUR* 13908 (359 CE); *ILCV* 3359 = *ICUR* 1426 (363 CE); *ILCV* 2631A = *ICUR* 19953 (364 CE); *ICUR* 23412 (372 CE); *ICUR* 6009 (375 CE); *ILCV* 2883 (addendum); and *ICUR* 19977 (395 CE).

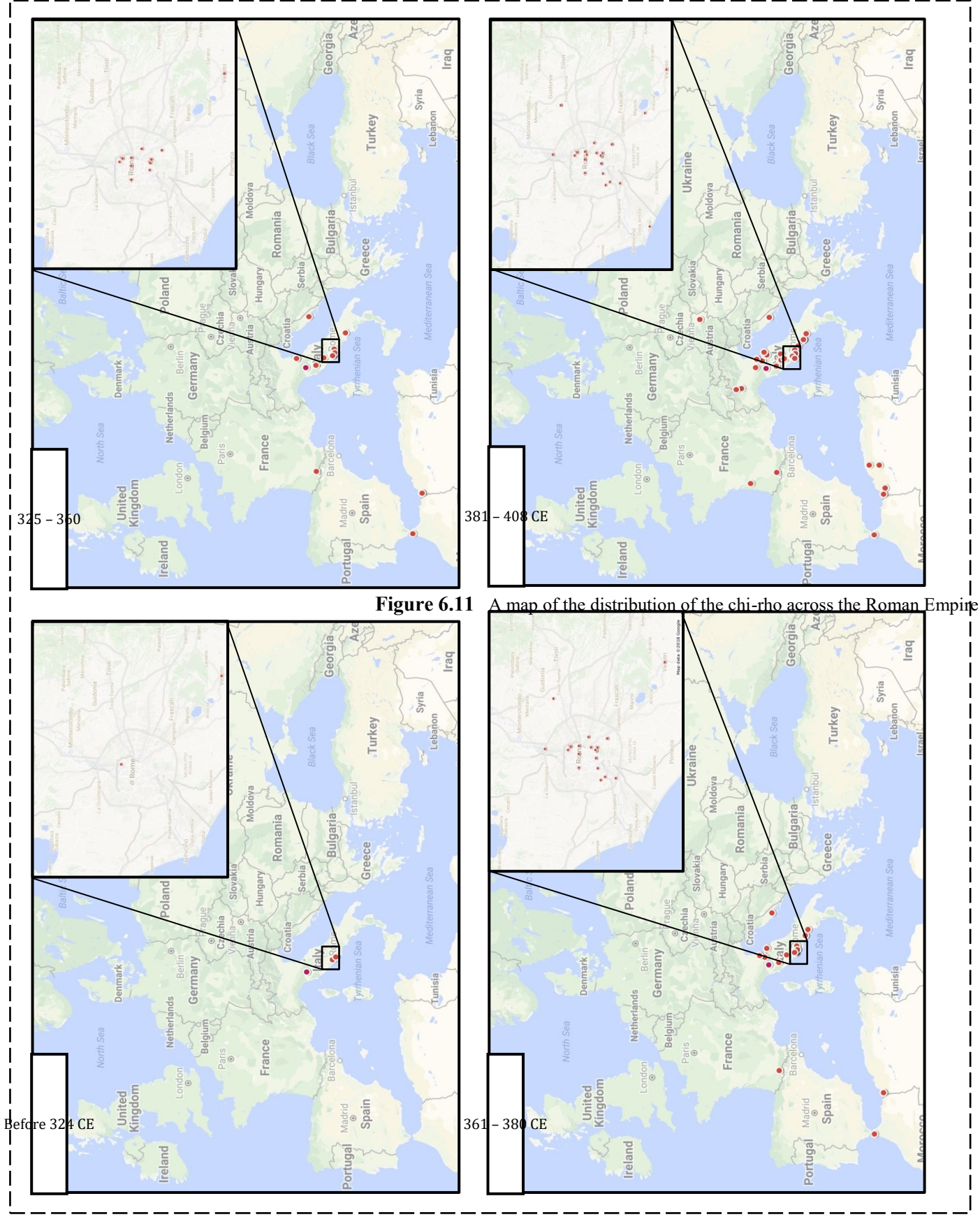

Figure 6.11 A map of the distribution of the chi-rho across the Roman Empire in funerary

The first datable instance of this, from the catacombs of Callixtus and Praetextatus in Rome, is on a sarcophagus from 338 CE. The inscription on the front of the sarcophagus reads:

> *eq(uitius?) Heraclius | qui fuit in saeculum | an(nos) XVIIII m(enses) VII d(ies) XX | le<c>t<or> r(egionis) sec(undae) fecerun(t) sibi | et filio suo benemerenti in p(ace) | decesit VII I<d>us Feb(ruarias) | Urso e(t) Polemio | cons(ulibu)s*
>
> Eq(uitius?) Heraclius, a lector of the second region, who was 19 years, 7 months, 20 days in age. (His parents?) made (this tomb) for themselves and their son, well-deserving in peace. He died the 7th day before the Ides of February, in the consulship of Ursus and Polemius.[84]
>
> *ICUR* 8719

A dove, which is holding a palm branch in its beak, appears to the right of the chi-rho. Of the datable inscriptions found in Appendix B, 11.04% (18 inscriptions) feature a dove (or bird), often holding some foliage, such as a branch, a leaf, a palm, or more rarely, a wreath.[85] Doves (or birds) are found on funerary inscriptions with chi-rhos throughout the fourth century. However, the above inscription is particular: the chi-rho featured on the sarcophagus is abnormally inscribed. It has an extra horizontal arm on its right-hand side, underneath the loop of the rho. It is as though the symbol is a synthesis between a chi-rho and a tau-rho. If this peculiar form of the chi-rho was unintentional, it is a possible indication that the 'correct' form of the symbol was not widely – or, perhaps, sufficiently – known throughout the empire or even in Rome itself. Other examples of anomalous uses of the chi-rho in inscriptions found throughout the fourth century demonstrate that this might indeed be the case: with chi-rhos appearing backwards, upside-down, sideways, or with extra horizontal arms.[86] That the chi-rho could appear in such a variety of

[84] The missing parts of the text and the translation are from Gordon (1983: 171-172, inscription 85).
[85] In chronological order, see *ICUR* 20769 (341 CE); *CIL VI* 33865 = *ILCV* 748 = *ICUR* 887 (348 CE); *CIL VIII* 20303 = *ILCV* 3339 (352 CE); *ILCV* 2451 = *ICUR* 8420 (355 CE); *ILCV* 3663 = *ICUR* 6499 (356 CE); *ILCV* 2824; *ICUR* 13908; *ICUR* 6026 (367 CE); *ICUR* 23412 (372 CE); *ICUR* 8726 (375 CE); *ICUR* 15772 (377 CE); *ILCV* 2969A = *ICUR* 17473 (379); *ILCV* 3003 = *ICUR* 15776 (384 CE); *ILCV* 1480 = *ICUR* 3202 (385 CE); *ICUR* 4820 (388 CE); *ILCV* 2970 = *ICUR* 17497 (389 CE); *ICUR* 23426 (390 CE); and *ILCV* 3444 (166) = *ICUR* 941 (397 CE).
[86] In chronological order, see *ILCV* 1539 = *ICUR* 7379 (338 CE); *CIL X* 2599 (347 CE); *ILCV* 3001 = *ICUR* 17433 (347 CE); *CIL VI* 33865 = *ILCV* 748 = *ICUR* 887 (348 CE); *CIL III* 9504 = *ILCV* 240 (360 CE); *ICUR* 23412 (372

forms indicates it was usually not intended as an abbreviation for the word 'Christ.' Instead, as I have mentioned before, it was a manifestation of the power of Christ that also protected – and referred to – the imperial family. I contend that the variations in the form of the chi-rho belie its function as a sort of talisman. The exact form of the symbol did not matter as much as the act of engraving it. Once again, this hypothesis will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter 7.

Chi-rhos in funerary inscriptions are sometimes found enclosed within a circle or wreath. In my dataset, a chi-rho is found within a circle or wreath 7.98% (13 inscriptions) of the time. The first datable example of this practice, from 339 CE, comes from Rome. The inscription reads:

> *Aur(eliae) Candidianae bene quesquen|ti in pace, quae uixit annis (sic) XXXI, | menses VIIII cum marito fuit annos | XI, menses VIII, dies X. deposita Kal(endas) | april(es) Constantino Aug(usto) II et Constante Aug(usto) cos(ulibu)s*
>
> To Aurelia Candidiana, resting well in peace, who lived thirty-one years, nine months. She was with her husband 11 years, 8 months, and 10 days. She was interred on the Kalends of April, during the consulship of Constantine, Augustus for the second time, and Constans, Augustus.
>
> *ILCV* 4225 = *ICUR* 45

The chi-rho appears above the inscription within a circle. Also from Rome, but dated two years later, comes the following inscription (see **Figure 6.12**):

> *Sisinnius <q>ui uixit | annis LXXV me(n)ses IIII | dies XXVIII recess(it) | in <p>ace XVI Kal(endas) Iu|lias Marcellin|o et Probino con(sulibus)*
>
> Sisinnius, who lived seventy-five years, four months and twenty-eight days, departed in peace the 16 days before the Kalends of July, during the consulship of Marcellinus and Probinus
>
> *ICUR* 20769

Instead of a circle, the chi-rho in this example is within a wreath, with a vessel and a bird appearing on either side of it. While occurring far more infrequently alongside the chi-rho than

CE); *ICUR* 13115 (382 CE); *ICUR* 13116 (383 CE); and *ICUR* 6061 (401 CE). As we have seen in Chapter 2, sign-users can alter signs slightly (and thus give them 'accents') when they place them sideways, etc.

doves, circles (or wreaths) continued to be used on funerary inscriptions throughout the fourth century.[87] The circle (or wreath) often surrounds the chi-rho itself, though not always.

Figure 6.12 The funerary inscription of Sisinnius, found in the cemetery of St Agnes, Rome (*ICUR* 20769). 341 CE.
Drawn by author (based on *EDB online*: 13665)

In his discussion of the Water Newton treasure in Britain, Petts talks about the motif of the chi-rho within a circle, stating that the circle is "echoing the celebratory wreath known as the corona."[88] Petts' assessment suggests the circle functioned as a less elaborate form of the wreath and likely derived its meaning from this association. According to Yegül, the wreath represented the concept of victory and was often used as a motif on epitaphs.[89] Indeed, there are numerous non-Christian examples of the wreath in funerary art.[90] As wreaths began to be represented more

[87] In chronological order, see *CIL III* 9504 = *ILCV* 2406 (360 CE); *ILCV* 2942 = *ICUR* 1429 (366 CE); *ICUR* 23412 (372 CE); *ICUR* 17469 (376 or 378 CE); *ILCV* 4354 = *ICUR* 1437 (379 CE); *ILCV* 2819A = *ICUR* 19963 (384 CE); *ILCV* 1480 = *ICUR* 3202 (385 CE); *CIL II.*14.4 2095 (393 CE); and *CIL VIII* 9715 = *ILCV* 2186 (406 CE).
[88] Petts (2003), 104-105.
[89] Yegül (2014), 208.
[90] For a few examples from *Volume III* of the *CIL*, see *CIL III* 4467; 8121; 13481; *14359;* and 14974.

and more frequently in connection with the chi-rho, they continued to be associated with the concept of victory.[91] In one particular epitaph from Pisaurum (modern Pesaro, Italy), which dates to either 377 or 383 CE, a chi-rho appears within a wreath above a hill.[92] This tombstone was a dedication by the deceased's brothers, and I propose that the chi-rho within a wreath represents victory over death. It perhaps even alludes to the military standard, the *labarum*, adopted under Constantine I. The funerary inscriptions depicting the chi-rho within a wreath or a circle are similar in style to the series of coins (mentioned in the previous chapter) that feature a chi-rho within a wreath. As we have seen, these coins echo the *vota* types – wherein a *vota* appears inside a wreath – which had been minted under the authority of emperors for centuries. Therefore, there was a long-standing process of association between victory and the chi-rho, which was not only found on coins but also appeared on funerary inscriptions.

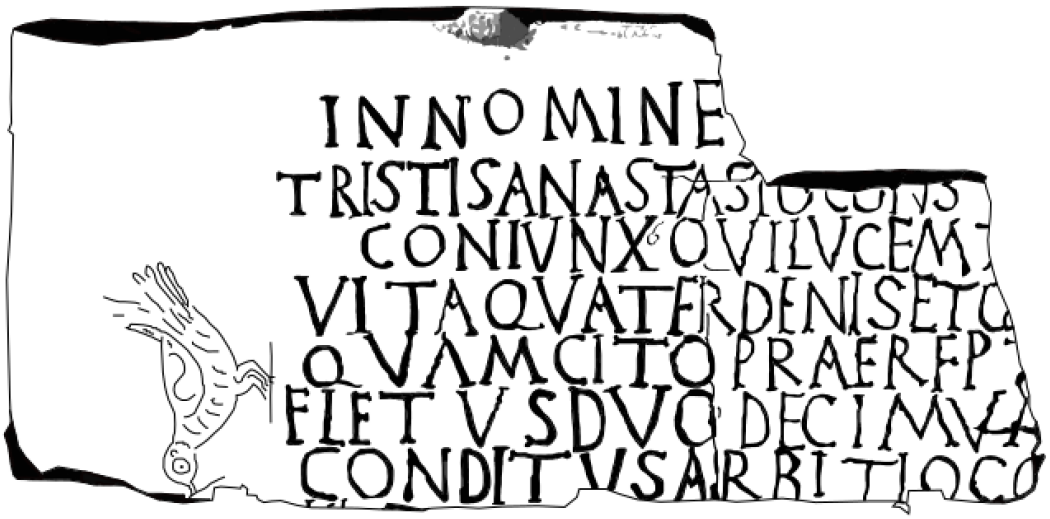

Figure 6.13 Preserved fragment of a funerary inscription from Rome that features an early Christian poem from Constantia to her husband (*ILCV* 2451 = *ICUR* 8420). The presence of a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega is indeterminate because the right of the tablet is now damaged. 355 CE.
Drawn by author (based on *EDB online:* 25695)

[91] Hünemörder, "Laurel," in *Brill's New Pauly*.
[92] *ILCV* 4144B = *ICUR* 2944. The inscription reads*: Iouiano karissimo | fecit Lampadius et Soteres fra|tres pientissimi Merodaude | [et Saturnino conss]*.

A final motif that is often used in conjunction with the chi-rho on funerary inscriptions is the alpha and omega. Sixty-four (39.26%) of the 163 inscriptions from my core dataset feature an alpha and omega. The first datable example of the alpha and omega comes from an epitaph that dates to 355 CE, and, like all other motifs discussed so far, the iconography first appears in Rome (see **Figure 6.13**). Notably, this inscription is also a very early Christian poem, written by Constantia, the wife of the deceased.[93]

In nomine A [☧ Ω domini]
Tristis Anastasio Cons[tantia carmina scribit]
coniunx, qui lucem t[enebris mutauit amaris].
Vita quarter denis et q[unique annis fuit, eheu]
quam cito praer<e>pt[us dilectae uxoris amori],
fletus duodecimum [cum Ianus sumeret ortum],
conditus Arbitio co[nsul cum duceret annum].

In the name [of the Lord?]
Constantia, his sad wedded wife, is writing verses for Anastasius,
Who has exchanged the light for the bitter shades.
His life was confined to forty-five years.
Alas! How swiftly he was snatched from the love of his beloved wife,
Lamented, while Janus was taking hold of the twelfth rising,
Buried when [Arbitio] was leading the year as consul.[94]
ILCV 2451 = *ICUR* 8420

Despite the invocation at the beginning of the inscription – half of which has been lost, which I discuss further below – Stevenson remarks that the epitaph seems to be, on the whole, 'pagan,' especially the reference to the bitter shades of death.[95] Moreover, the inscription also mentions the non-Christian god Janus and lacks standard elements to make it markedly Christian, such as the inclusion of *in pace* or the almost formulaic layout of the majority of the epitaphs we have

[93] Stevenson (2005), 60. This is one of several poems that feature either a chi-rho or a tau-rho (see Chapter 3). The use of the chi-rho and tau-rho in poetic inscriptions goes beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it is an interesting aspect of their use that should be addressed in the future.
[94] This translation comes from Stevenson (2005), 60. Stevenson does not mention from what source her reconstruction of the poem is based. However, Marucchi (1914: 196) mentions getting the rest of the text from de Rossi in the *ICUR*. Since the reconstruction is the same, Stevenson's version of the text likely also comes from de Rossi.
[95] Stevenson (2005), 61.

seen thus far. However, I do not think that anything precludes the inscription from a Christian interpretation, particularly as it also contains the image of a dove and, even more telling, was found in the catacombs of Domitilla, a securely Christian context. As mentioned above in the brief introduction to early Christian epitaphs, Christians often used similar literary conventions, such as *dis manibus*, as their 'pagan' counterparts**.** This epitaph's style might differ from others we have seen because Constantia was writing a poem for her husband and thus following literary, rather than Christian, formulaic conventions. Furthermore, and most importantly, as is evident from examining the inscription itself, it is indeterminate if a chi-rho was even placed after *in nomine*. Even though both the *ICUR* and *ILCV* include the chi-rho, a significant portion of the marble tablet's right side is missing.[96] A funerary inscription from Castellum Tingitanum (modern Chlef, Algeria), dated to 406 CE, provides an example of what formulae can appear after *in nomine*. The phrase on that inscription is followed by *dei et cristi,* which might indicate the chi-rho itself was never actually used in Constantia's poem.[97] Incidentally, the top of the inscription from Castellum Tingitanum does have a chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and omega. Its placement underlines that the chi-rho is not merely a monogram for the word Christ, as it is not always used as a replacement for the word 'Christ' in inscriptions. Returning briefly to Constantia's poetic epitaph from 355 CE, it is clear that it is problematic for several reasons and, therefore, cannot provide concrete evidence for the earliest use of the alpha and omega in conjunction with the chi-rho.

[96] According to Stevenson (2005: 60-61), it would have been a chi, rather than a chi-rho, that followed the alpha.
[97] *CIL VIII* 9715 = *ILCV* 2186.

A second inscription, from around the year 359 CE, is a more secure example of the use of an alpha and omega with a chi-rho.[98] It reads:

> *Aqundino et Proculo co[nsulibus natus est Marcellin]us | XI Kal(endas) Iulias die Beneri[s, qui uixit anno]s XVIIII | et mensis III dies VI depositus est V Kal(endas) Octobris. Marcellinus | depositus in pacem. Marcellinus se [uiu]u (sic) fecit*
>
> During the consulships of Aqundinus and Proculus, Marcellinus was born 11 days before the Kalends of July, on a Friday. He lived 19 years, 3 months and 6 days. He was interred 5 days before the Kalends of October. Marcellinus was interred in peace. Marcellinus made (this) when he himself was alive.
>
> *ILCV* 4399 = *ICUR* 11757

A chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and omega, appears to the right of the inscription. Of the 224 inscriptions in my data sample (see Appendix B), the inclusion of an alpha and omega occurs more frequently in inscriptions than either doves or wreaths. However, the motif emerges the latest in inscriptions, at least based on the existing evidence from this dataset. From the 360s onwards, the alpha and omega appear on funerary inscriptions with increasing frequency.[99] As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, the inclusion of the alpha and omega is a reference to Jesus as both the beginning and the end, and their appearance alongside the chi-rho augments a Christian interpretation of the symbol. Therefore, it is significant that the letters are only found in

[98] The *ILCV* dates the inscription to 340 CE, but that is not when Marcellinus died; rather it is the date he was born. Nevertheless, since Marcellinus made the epitaph himself, we can assume that the inscription dates slightly earlier than when he died at nineteen.

[99] In chronological order, see *ILCV* 2941A = *ICUR* 16967 (360 CE); *ILCV* 2978B = *ICUR* 8421 (362 CE); *ICUR* 1427 (363 CE); *ICUR* 4934 (likely between 365 and 390); *ILCV* 2942 = *ICUR* 1429 (366 CE); *ILCV* 4343 (366 CE); *ILCV* 3943 = *ICUR* 896 (367 CE); *ICUR* 12529 (367 CE); *ICUR* 15768 (367 CE); *ILCV* 1478 = *ICUR* 2087 (370 CE); *ICUR* 3179 (370 CE); *ILCV* 2968 (371 CE); *ICUR* 1432 (371 CE); *ICUR* 15502 (371 CE); *ICUR* 23412 (372 CE); *ICUR* 4748 (372 CE); *ILCV* 2795B addendum (373 CE); *ICUR* 13107 (373 CE); *ILCV* 4258A = *ICUR* 8725 (373 CE); *CIL VI* 32045a = *ICUR* 13109 (375 CE); *ILCV* 4219 = *ICUR* 11769 (376 CE); *ICUR* 15772 (377 CE); *ICUR* 11772 (378 CE); *ILCV* 2969A = *ICUR* 17473 (379 CE); *ILCV* 4354 = *ICUR* 1437 (379 CE); *ILCV* 2883 addendum (380 CE); *ICUR* 9572 (381 CE); *ICUR* 17476 (381 CE); *ILCV* 4191 = *ICUR* 15353 (383 CE); *ILCV* 2819A = *ICUR* 19963 (384 CE); *ICUR* 8426 (384 CE); *ILCV* 2946 (386 or 422 CE); *ILCV* 2970 = *ICUR* 17497 (389 CE); *ILCV* 4215 = *ICUR* 6049 (390 CE); *ICUR* 23426 (390 CE); *CIL X* 5646 = *ILCV* 2935A (392 CE); *ICUR* 6052 (392 CE); *CIL II* 2095 (393 CE); *ICUR* 8430 (393 CE); *CIL XI* 802 = *ILCV* 1494 (394 CE); *ILCV* 2606 = *ICUR* 6053 (395 CE); *ICUR* 19977 (395 CE); *CIL X* 4493 = *ILCV* 2932A (397 CE); *ILCV* 2927 = *ICUR* 19978 (397 CE); *CIL X* 4493A = *ILCV* 2958 (399 CE); *ILCV* 4400B = *ICUR* 309 (399 CE); *ICUR* 6476 (399 CE); *CIL V.2* (exact number not given; inscription is found on page 1060); *ICUR* 6061 (401 CE); *ILCV* 2974 = *ICUR* 15356 (402 CE); *ICUR* 10854 (404? CE); *CIL XIII* 912 = *ILCV* 3040 (405 CE); *ICUR* 6066 (405 CE); *CIL VIII* 9715 = *ILCV* 2186 (406 CE); *CIL VIII* 21555 (408 CE); *CIL XIV* 1946 = *ILCV* 2801 (408 CE).

conjunction with the chi-rho nearly fifty years after it was first introduced as Constantine's saving symbol. They do not appear together in a private – or public – stone inscription until after several mints had already used this iconography on coins issued under the authority of the usurper Magnentius.

Doves/birds, wreaths/circles, and the alpha and the omega are the most common motifs accompanying the chi-rho in funerary inscriptions. However, a few other motifs begin to appear alongside the chi-rho in the second half of the fourth century, including vessels,[100] dolphins,[101] peacocks,[102] various occupational tools,[103] and, in one case, the *protome* of a young man.[104] There are two datable inscriptions, in particular, that have a combination of several unique and revealing motifs. The first, from Rome, dates to 363 CE (see **Figure 6.14**).

[haec aet]erna domus, in qua nunc ipsa secura. quiescis (palm)
[corpore, namque tu]us spiritus a carne recedens (wreath)
[est sociatu]s sanctis pro meritis et opera tanta. (chi-rho)
[quaeque ...]m[105] *metuisti semper quiescis secura.* (Peter symbol)
[mandasti corp]us terrae pignusque receptus (palm)
[... spl]endori cum lumine claro (swastika)
[...]s, quae te semper deo dica<vi>sti (flower?)
[...]tas, sed pro factis ad alta uocaris (omega)
[..]ca Pacatiano cum multa debebit (rho?)
[...Pac]atianus Eleuteriae, matri suae, locum fecit,
[quae uixit a]nn(is) pl(us) m(inus) LXXV, mens(ibus) II
d(iebus) X dep(osita) IIII Kal(endas) Iun(ias) dormit
[in pace cons(ul<a>tu)] D(omini) n(ostri) Cl(audi) Iuliani Aug(usti) IIII et Fl(avi) Sallusti con(sule)
[.... titulum] Hesperius, quem nutrit, iscripsit.

[100] See *ICUR* 20769 (338 CE) and *CIL III* 9504 = *ILCV* 240 (359 CE).
[101] See *CIL III* 9504 = *ILCV* 240 (360 CE). Although there is only one datable inscription, there are several instances of the chi-rho occurring with images of dolphins (see, for example, *ICUR* 3844; *ICUR* 4174; and *ICUR* 4415).
[102] See *ICUR* 6009 (375 CE) and *ICUR* 19977 (395 CE).
[103] See *ICUR* 8430 (393 CE) and *ILCV* 2974 = *ICUR* 15356 (402 CE).
[104] See ILCV *2824* = *ICUR* 6026. Some of these motifs, particularly dolphins and vessels (*canthari*), are also common on North African tomb mosaics. For more information on late Roman, Vandalic, and Byzantine tomb mosaics, see Terry (1998).
[105] The *ICUR* suggests the missing words in the sentence are *quaeque deum*, which makes for an awkward translation. Since the word before *metuisti* ends with an 'm', the missing word could be the accusation of *mors* (perhaps the phrase *quemque mortem* 'whatever death'). In my translation, I removed the word *deum* and left the *quaeque*.

> This home, in which you yourself are now safe, is eternal. You are at rest in body, for your spirit, receding from your body, is joined with the holy by virtue of your merits and such great deeds. Whatever things you feared, you are resting safe always. You entrusted your body to the earth and it was accepted as a token…for splendor with bright light…which you dedicated yourself always to God…but you are called for your deeds to the high (place)…since (he/she/it) will owe Pacatianus many things…Pacatianus made this place for Eleuteria, his mother, who lived for more or less 75 years, two months and ten days. She was interred the 4th day before the Kalends of June. She rests in peace during the fourth consulship of our lord Claudius Julianus Augustus and in the consul of Flavius Sallustus…Herperius, whom she raised, inscribed (it).
>
> *ILCV* 3359 = *ICUR* 1426

Although the left side of the inscription is partially damaged, the right side features a variety of symbols, including a chi-rho, after each line. The Peter monogram, a combination of the Latin letters P and E, is especially relevant to my analysis of the chi-rho. A second inscription from the year 363 CE also features the Peter monogram,[106] and the symbol can be found on several undated inscriptions.[107] One main difference between the Peter monogram and the chi-rho is that the Peter monogram is formulated with Latin – not Greek – letters. This likely reflects that the Peter monogram was created later and reminds us that the chi-rho was a symbol borrowed from the repertoire of pre-Christian symbols. The Peter monogram was likely inspired by the chi-rho, as it was not used in inscriptions as a replacement for the word Peter but as a freestanding symbol. The Peter monogram on the inscription from 363 CE emphasizes the chi-rho's qualities as a symbol: in many inscriptions, it is used as a monogram rather than a textual abbreviation and only gradually becomes semiotically connected to Christianity over time.

[106] *ICUR* 1427.
[107] For a few examples see *CIL XI* 265 = *ILCV* 1798; *ILCV* 94b; *ICUR* 1393; *ICUR* 4368; *ICUR* 5277; and *ICUR* 5998.

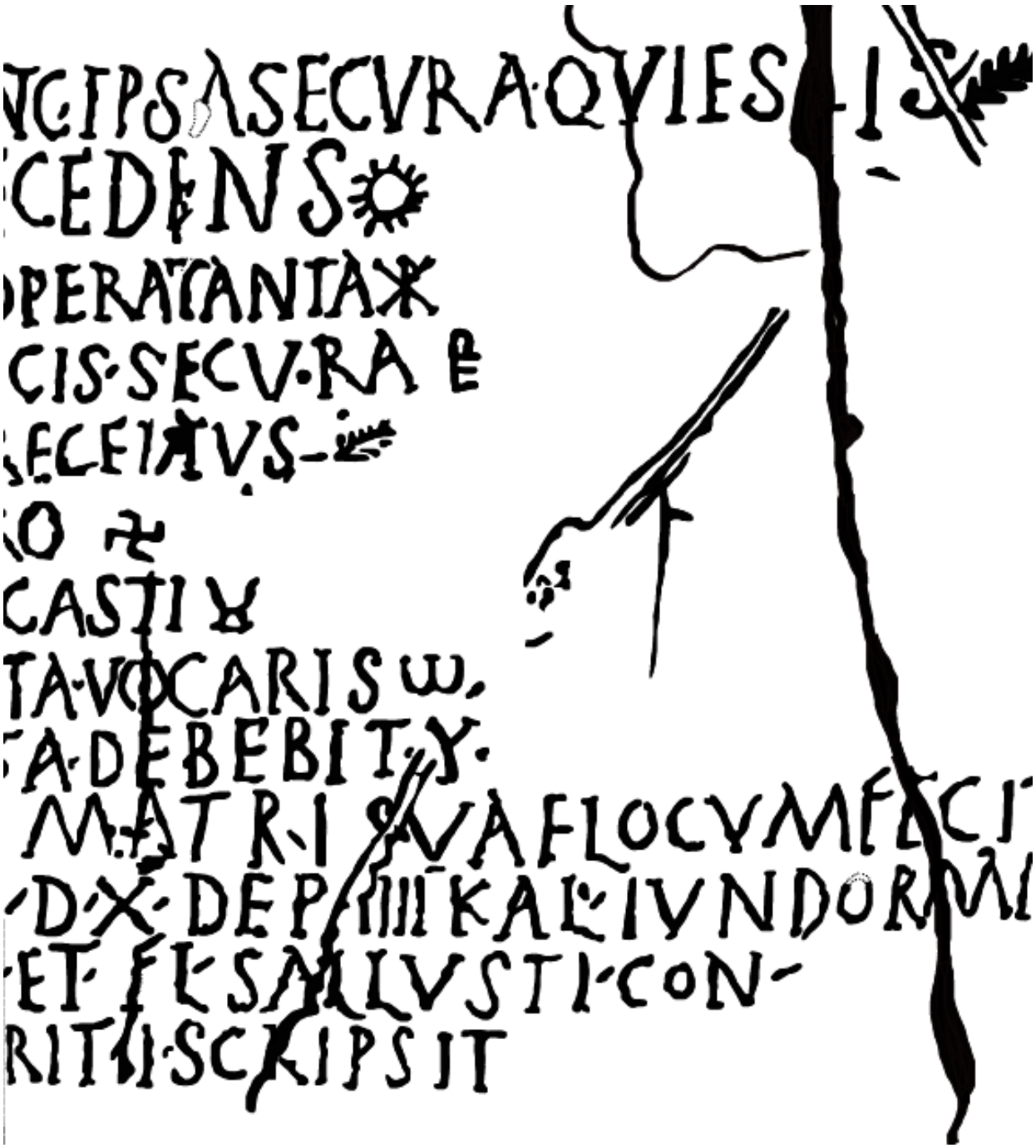

Figure 6.14 A close-up of the right side of the funerary inscription of Eleuteria found in Rome (*ILCV* 3359 = *ICUR* 1426). Although the left side of the inscription is damaged, the right side features several different symbols, including a chi-rho and a monogram for the apostle Peter's name (a combination of the Latin letters P and E). 363 CE.
Drawn by author (based on Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss / Slaby)

The second funerary inscription that I will discuss has several curious features and a combination of Christian and Jewish symbolism. The marble tablet, now damaged, comes from a cemetery on the Via Latina (in Rome) and dates to 400 CE (see **Figure 6.15**). The inscription reads:

> *Caleuius bendidit (sic) Auin(io) trisomu(m),*[108] *ubi positi erant vini (sic) et Caluilius et | Lucius in pa(ce) co(n)s(ulatu) Stil(ichonis)*
>
> Calevius sold to Avinius a place for three bodies, where both Calvilius and Lucius had (already) been placed together in peace, in the consulship of Stilicho.[109]
>
> *ILCV* 4942 = *ICUR* 15780

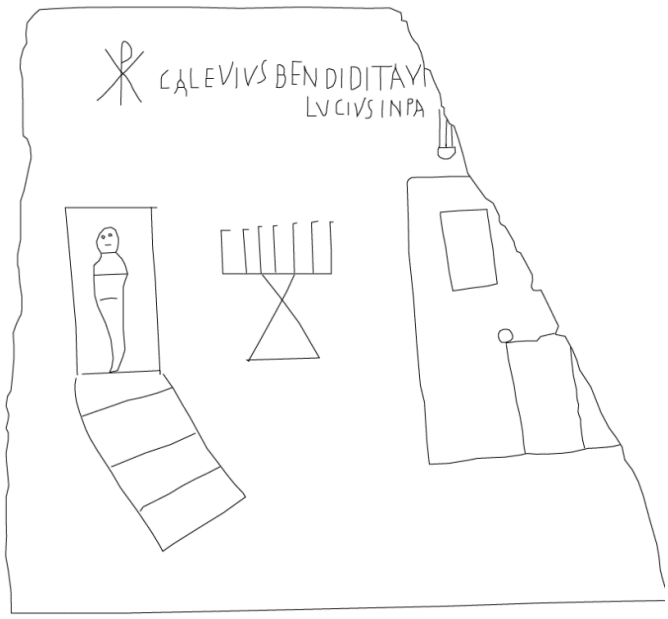

Figure 6.15 A funerary inscription on a marble tablet from a cemetery on the Via Latina, Rome (*ILCV* 4942 = *ICUR* 15780). The inscription has a combination of Christian and Jewish imagery. 400 CE.
Drawn by author (based on *EDB online*: 5520)

The iconography includes a chi-rho, which appears before the start of the inscription; a tomb, which has the wrapped body of a deceased person; a fish; a balance; a house; and a seven-pronged candelabrum. McCaul says that the mummified figure represents Lazarus and symbolizes resurrection.[110] However, I would add that there is no reason to assume that the body does not belong to one of the deceased people mentioned in the inscription. Secondly, although the *ILCV* includes the epitaph

[108] *Trisomu(m)* was the word for a triple burial in a catacomb (see Lewis (2010) "Catacombs" in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome*) and is a Greek-Latin hybrid word (see Hoskier 1914: 130).
[109] My translation was influenced by McCaul's (1868: 6). For more information on Calevius who sold the tomb, see Rüpke & Glock (2008: 590).
[110] McCaul (1868), 7.

under its Jewish inscriptions section, the identification of the candelabra as a 'Jewish' menorah is uncertain.[111] Even if the iconography was intended to indicate adherence to both the Jewish and Christian religions, one should not consider the various motifs in conflict with each other. Calvilius and Lucius may have devoted themselves to different religions, and this gravestone showcased both of their faiths. It is equally plausible that the imagery coalesced to make the tombstone more inviolable against grave robbers, especially since the menorah – if it is to be understood as such – also held apotropaic qualities.[112] We have seen throughout this dissertation that so-called 'Christian' symbols can co-exist with other typically religious imagery on various types of objects, especially in the fourth century, which was a period of religious negotiation. This tombstone reflects the dynamism of the symbolic art of the fourth century.

Briefly, in this section, I have described several datable funerary inscriptions that feature a chi-rho. As is evident, the chi-rho frequently appears in funerary inscriptions from primarily Christian contexts, such as the catacombs in Rome. We have seen that other iconographic motifs, such as doves/birds, wreaths/circles, and the alpha and the omega, often accompany it. The alpha and omega, in particular, further strengthen the Christian signification of the chi-rho on these inscriptions. But despite this, there is sparse evidence for the use of the chi-rho on 'Christian' funerary inscriptions before the 330s, nearly two decades after Constantine received his vision. Of the 163 datable funerary inscriptions with a chi-rho, only 1 (less than one percent) was commissioned before the 330s. In all likelihood, some of the 4060 inscriptions that cannot be securely dated could date to before the 330s. However, if we consider the small sample of 163 datable inscriptions as representative of the bigger picture, we can still determine that the chi-rho

[111] Dulaey (1983: 4) says that the seven-pronged candelabrum is common in Christian contexts.
[112] For more information, see Hachlili (2001), 205; and Vilozny (2012), 252-253.

was only gradually placed on funerary inscriptions, well after its use in other contexts in the fourth century.

6.3 Epigraphic Evidence of the Tau-rho

Of the 224 datable inscriptions in my dataset, forty-six (20.54%) have tau-rhos. Of these, only 6 (13.04%) are not epitaphs. One of these inscriptions, the *mensa martyrum* of 329 CE from Médiouna, has already been discussed above. I will now discuss the rest of the non-funerary inscriptions first.

6.3.1 The Tau-rho in Non-Funerary Inscriptions

The first time a tau-rho appears in a non-funerary context is on a fresco at the so-called 'House of Fausta' in Rome, mentioned earlier in this chapter (refer back to **Figure 6.4**). On the same mural featuring hippocamps, a tau-rho – with an alpha and omega suspended from its horizontal cross-bar – appears to the right of the words *IN | SIGNO [H]OC EST PATRIS VICTORIA*.[113] The phrase belongs with a nearby inscription, *IMP LIC LICINI NOS IV COS*, which provides both with a date of 315 CE.[114] Once again, we have an early example of the tau-rho with the alpha and omega. The inscription is also reminiscent of the words Constantine I received in a vision before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge: *in this sign you will conquer* (ἐν τούτῳ νίκα). Most importantly, the chi-rho (see section 6.2.1 above) and the tau-rho appear on the same wall at an imperial residence. The inscription with the tau-rho dates to an earlier period and refers to the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, using the symbol described in Lactantius' version (see Chapter 4). The inscription with the chi-rho, on the other hand, is from nearly a generation later and is

[113] Scrinari (1991), 164.
[114] Bardill (2012), 164.

associated with the Constantinian imperial dynasty. These inscriptions on a fresco provide strong evidence for the original intended message of both symbols: one Christian and the other a type of imperial insignia. As indicated in previous chapters, this reflects the semiotic development of both symbols as they came to be used in the fourth century.

The next inscription, which dates between 364 and 367 CE, is an honorific inscription from Thamugadi (modern Timgad, Algeria). The inscription features a tau-rho flanked by an alpha and omega. It reads:

> *A* ☧ *ω* | *coloni colonie* | *Marchiane Traiane (sic)* | *Thamogadiensis* | *Elio Iuliano fl(amini) p(er)p(etuo), presidali,* | *ob reparationem civitatis* | *ordo et populus* | *tabula patronatus* | *obtulerunt*[115]
>
> The settlers from *Colonia Marciana Traiana Thamugadi*, the council and people, present (this) patronal tablet to governor Elius Julianus, perpetual *flamen*, because of his restoration (of the city).
>
> *AE* 1913, 25

The settles of Thamugadi dedicated this inscription to Elius Julianus, their governor. As with the patronal inscription of 347 CE from Paestum for Aquilius Nestorius and Aquilius Aper, Elius Julianus was also the *flamen* of the city. The confluence of Christian imagery with the mention of a traditional 'pagan' role is even more significant in this inscription, as it is not only later in the fourth century, but it also features the alpha and omega, thus emphasizing the Christian signification of the tau-rho at the start of the inscription.

The final three inscriptions that feature a tau-rho in a non-funerary context are from the last quarter of the fourth century. The first is an honorific inscription from Ostia dating between 379 and 382 CE.[116] The inscription announces the devotion of Anicius and his family to God:

> *Anicius Auciienius (sic) Bassus v(ir) c(larissimus) et Tyrrenia Hono|rata c(larissima) f(emina) eius cum filiis deo sanctisque devoti* ☧

[115] The text of this inscription was taken from Leone (2013), 252.
[116] The date comes from when Anicius Auchenius Bassus became the proconsul of Campania (see *CIL* 1875).

> Anicius Auchenius Bassus, an illustrious man, and Tyrrenia Honorata, his illustrious wife, made (this) with their sons in devotion to God and the divine.[117]
>
> *CIL XIV* 1875 = *ILCV* 91 = *ILS* 1292

The second inscription, from Rome, dates to 390 CE. Found on the base of a column, it is a dedication in the Basilica of Saint Paul. There are three separate inscriptions on the column, but only one of them provides a date:[118]

> *A Ꝑ Ꝏ columna Paul(i) a[postol(i)]; natale X[IIII Kal(endas) Dec(embres) consulatu D(omini) n(ostri)] Valentin[i]ani Aug(usti) IIII et Neoteri u(iri) c(lasrissimi); administrante Fl(avio) Filippo uir[o clarissimo;...curato]re Fl(avio) Anastasio [u(iro) c(larissimo); t]rib(uno) praetoria[no]…*[119]
>
> A column of the apostle Paul; built 14 days before the Kalends of December, in the consulship of our lord Valentinian, Augustus for the fourth time and of the illustrious man, Neoterius; when Flavius Filippus, the illustrious man, was directing (it); under the supervision of Flavius Anastasius, the illustrious man; under the praetorian tribune…
>
> *ILCV* 1857 = *ICUR* 4778c

Even without the inclusion of the tau-rho, these inscriptions are linked to Christianity: the first mentions the practitioners' devotion to God, while the latter is on a column base in a basilica. This use is very different from how the chi-rho is employed on non-funerary inscriptions, as discussed above. The tau-rho is not directly associated with individuals from the Constantinian dynasty. Even when used at an imperial residence, such as the fresco from the 'House of Fausta,' the symbol is connected with Constantine's divine vision and the sign of God, rather than the imperial family.

The final object, and the only piece of jewellery to be discussed in this chapter, is a pendant of the empress Maria, wife to Honorius, which dates between 398 and 407 CE (see

[117] For the text of the inscription and the spelling of Auchenius, see Boin 2013: 79.
[118] The other two inscriptions (*ICUR* 4778a and 4778b) talk of the devotion of Pope Sirico to the apostle Paul. See also, Papi 2011: 191.
[119] The text of the Latin is taken from Papi (2011), 187.

Figure 6.16).[120] This pendant consists of two agate cameos placed back-to-back set with gold, garnets, and emeralds.[121] On one side, the names of *HONORI* and *MARIA,* as well as *STELICHO* and *SERENA*, Maria's parents, form the shape of a chi-rho, with Honorius and Maria's names creating the rho portion of the symbol. The other side has a second chi-rho formed from the names of *STELICHO* and *SERENA* and their two other children, *ELCHERI* and *THERMANTIA*. *VIVATIS* forms an additional horizontal bar across the chi-rho on each cameo. A minuscule tau- rho appears at the junction where the chi-rho and the word *vivatis* intersect.[122] This cameo is similar to the inscriptions from the 'House of Fausta,' providing evidence for the imperial family's dichotomous utilization of the two symbols. The chi-rho, formed out of the names of the emperor and his in-laws, is connected to the imperial dynasty.[123] On the other hand, the tau-rho is associated with the acclamation *vivatis (may you live!)*. Since the names of the imperial family appear in the vocative, the tau-rho imbues the expression with the hope that the imperial family live with Christ as followers of the Christian religion.

Figure 6.16 Agate pendant of the empress Maria, possibly from Milan (*ILCV* 15 = Spier 752). The names of the emperor, empress, and her parents form a chi-rho. A tau-rho appears in the middle of the chi-rho formation. 398 – 407 CE.
© 1993 RMN, Musée du Louvre (no. OA 9523)

[120] *ILCV* 15 = Spier (2007a), 138, no. 752.
[121] Spier (2007a), 138.
[122] I discuss this object here, rather than in section 6.2.1 above (the examination of the chi-rho in non-funerary art), because of the tau-rho. Garipzanov (2015: 8) interprets one of the symbol's – on the Honorius and Maria side – at the junction of the chi-rho and the word *vivatis* as an ankh-cross. However, upon close examination, the symbols on either side of the pendant have loops that are only rounded on the right side, so they must both be tau-rhos.
[123] Garipzanov (2018), 77. Garipzanov also believes that the chi-rho is an imperial symbol.

Figure 6.17 A map of the distribution of the tau-rho across the Roman Empire in non-fune

Although – as stressed throughout this chapter – my sample size is minimal, these datable inscriptions demonstrate as a collective the association of the tau-rho with the Christian religion. Unlike the earliest uses of the chi-rho in fourth-century non-funerary inscriptions, the inscriptions with the tau-rho – in 3 of 6 examples – are more often supplemented with the inclusion of the alpha and omega, further solidifying the symbol's Christian interpretation. These non-funerary inscriptions also demonstrate a break in the employment of the tau-rho in the fourth century. Given the evidence we have, whereas early in the fourth century the symbol is used as a reference to Christianity, it stops being used in non-funerary inscriptions for decades until it reappears towards to end of the fourth century as a symbol that again references Christianity, appearing for example on a dedicatory column in a Christian basilica. As indicated by **Figure 6.17**, however, non-funerary uses of the tau-rho are very infrequent, and the symbol, throughout the century, is found mainly in Rome. While we should be cautious about extrapolating too much information from this limited evidence, the fact that it augments the conclusions drawn from previous chapters – such as the pre-Constantinian use of the tau-rho in Christian inscription as demonstrated in Chapter 3 and the use of the chi-rho on coins from the Constantinian dynasty as evidenced in Chapter 5 – is an encouraging result. Together, all the evidence indicates a general pattern of the use of the two symbols in the fourth century. Chapters 7 and 8 will focus on these conclusions in more detail.

6.3.2 The Tau-rho in Funerary Inscriptions

The use of the tau-rho in funerary inscriptions, as evident by the pie chart in **Figure 6.8** above, is less frequent than the chi-rho and, for the most part, occurs in epitaphs from the second half of the fourth century. Of the 46 inscriptions from my dataset with a tau-rho, forty (86.96%) appear in funerary inscriptions. Like the chi-rho, a variety of other motifs often accompany the tau-rho. Before exploring these motifs any further, I will first discuss the evidence for the fourth-century use of the tau-rho on epitaphs.

MIRAE · INNOCENTIAE AC SAPIENTIAE
PVERO · MARCIANO QVI VIXIT ANN·IIII ET
MENSES·IIII·DIES·II · QVIESCET IN PACE
D · PRID · KAL · DEC · ARBETIONE ET LOLLIANO COSS · PARENTES FECERVNT

Figure 6.18 A funerary inscription from the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome (*ICUR* 24862). Below the inscription, a man stands holding a long tau-rho. 355 CE.
Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 6893)

The first securely datable instance of the tau-rho in a funerary context comes from the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome. The inscription, which dates to 355 CE, reads:

> *mirae innocentiae ac sapientiae | puero Marciano qui uixit ann(os) IIII et | menses IIII dies II quiescet in pace | d(epositus) prid(ie) Kal(endas) dec(embres) Arbetione et Lolliano co(n)ss(ulibus) parentes fecerunt*
>
> For Marcianus, a boy of wonderful innocence and wisdom, who lived 4 years and 4 months and 2 days. He will rest in peace. He was interred the day before the Kalends of December, during the consulship of Arbetio and Lollianus. His parents made (this).
>
> *ICUR* 24862

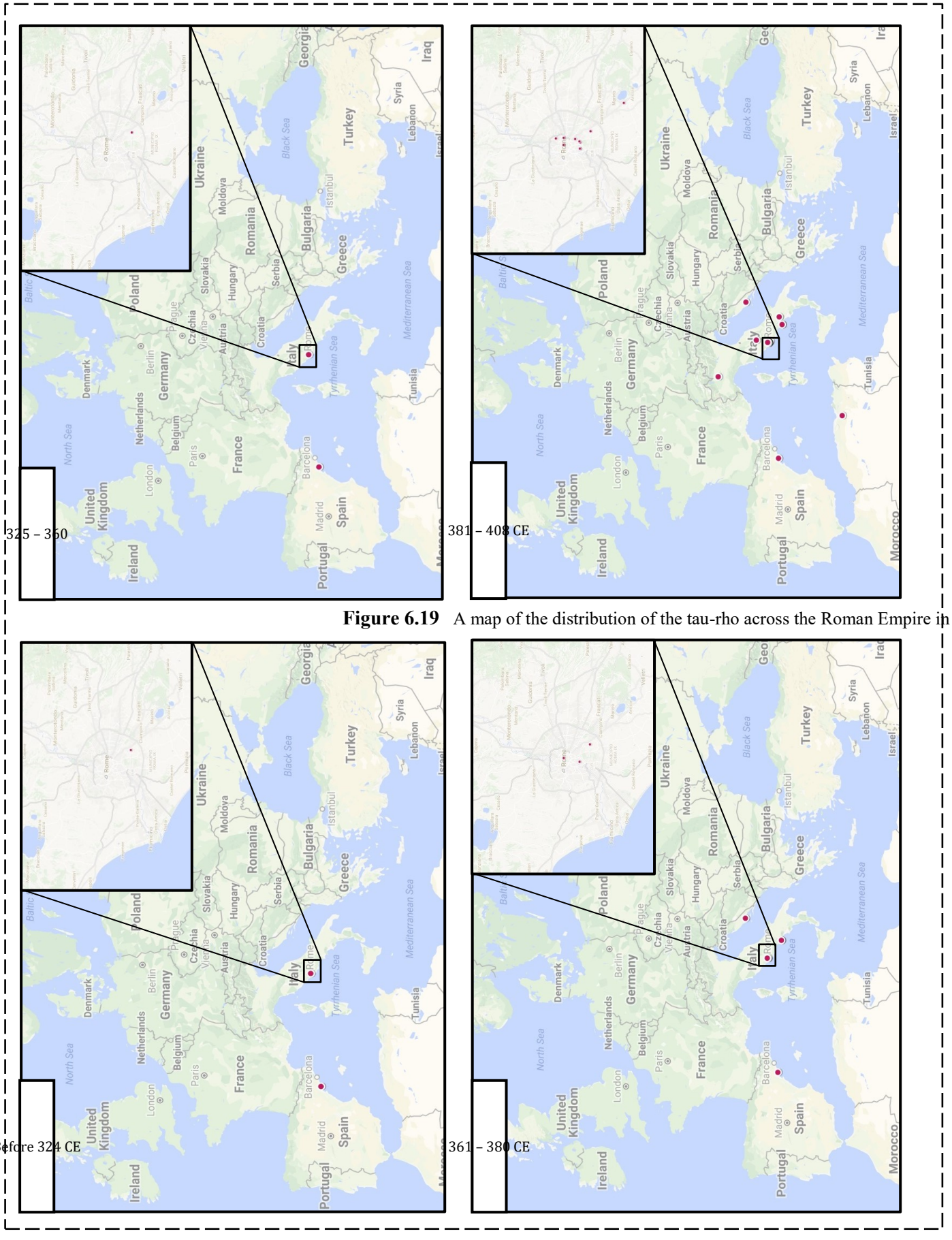

Figure 6.19 A map of the distribution of the tau-rho across the Roman Empire in funerary co

The tau-rho is a prominent feature of this inscription (see **Figure 6.18**). A man stands, holding an extended version of the symbol as if it were a staff. As indicated in the previous chapter, similar iconography also appears on the coins of Honorius, which depict the emperor holding a long tau-rho (see Appendix A, Type M2). This example is the first instance, within the parameters of this study, of a motif appearing in an inscription before being introduced on the imperial coinage. For the first time, we see the transference and borrowing of a stylized version of one of the symbols from the private sphere into the imperial one.

The tau-rho does not show up again on a datable inscription until a decade later, in 365 CE, when it appears on Asterius' epitaph in Rome. The inscription is in the standard style: noting the deceased's name and when he died.[124] From 365 CE onwards, the tau-rho is used as a 'regular' motif on funerary inscriptions.[125] **Figure 6.19** displays the places in the empire where archaeologists have discovered datable inscriptions with tau-rhos. As is evident, there is an increase in the use of the tau-rho in funerary contexts in the second half of the century, with a significant upsurge occurring from the reign of Theodosius I onwards. As with the chi-rho, most datable funerary inscriptions are from Rome.[126] However, unlike the chi-rho, the tau-rho quickly spreads into the realm of funerary inscriptions in other areas of the Roman Empire within a few years of its initial (re)use in Rome.[127] This rapid dispersal might indicate that the symbol was

[124] *ICUR* 6025. The inscription reads: *Asterius innocens | hic positus est qui uixit ano | m(ensibus) VIII d(iebus) X kal(endis) iul(iis) Val(entiniano) et [Val(ente) cons(ulibu)s).*
[125] Once again, I use the term loosely. The occurrence of tau-rhos on all of the Christian funerary inscriptions from Rome is approximately 1%.
[126] This list contains only those epitaphs with no other decorative motif other than the tau-rho. In chronological order *IGC* 115 = *ILCV* 4458 = *ICUR* 2092 (373); *IGC* 100 = *ICUR* 4271b (392 CE); *CIL VI* 31935 = *ILCV* 300 = *ICUR* 3211 (392); *ILCV* 4556 (393 or 394 CE); *ICUR* 987 (399 CE); and *ICUR* 10855 (407 CE). *CIL VI* 31935 (=*ILCV* 300 = *ICUR* 3211) has another funerary inscription engraved on it: it does not have a tau-rho and it dates to 470 CE.
[127] Already in 368 CE the symbol is used on an inscription in Naples (*ILCV* 4393A = *ICUR* 2808). After 368 CE, the symbol is also found on datable inscriptions from Salonis (*ILCV* 3835B); Setif (*CIL VIII* 20412 = *ILCV* 2442); Spoletium (*CIL XI* 4968 = *ILCV* 2169); Aeclanum (*CIL IX* 1363 = *ILCV* 3601); and Mediolanium (*CIL V* 6224 = *ILCV* 1501).

already familiar in other contexts – such as its use as a *nomen sacrum* scribal abbreviation as seen in Chapter 3 – in other parts of the empire, and thus was ready to be incorporated in funerary inscriptions once it had become popular in Rome.

The tau-rho in the Asterius inscription, which also features a dove holding a palm branch, is flanked by an alpha and omega. By the 360s, both motifs had appeared alongside the chi-rho and, since they had already developed as iconography on funerary inscriptions in general, were readily available for use in conjunction with the tau-rho. A dove appears in 6 (15%) of the 40 datable funerary inscriptions with a tau-rho,[128] a slightly higher percentage than used with the chi-rho. The alpha and omega pairing, on the other hand, is a prevalent motif: appearing alongside the tau-rho sixty-five percent of the time.[129] This statistic demonstrates a significant increase from the forty percent of inscriptions that feature the letters paired with the chi-rho. As already seen in the 'House of Fausta' example, sometimes the alpha and omega appear suspended from the horizontal bar of the tau-rho, thus becoming joined with the symbol itself.

In fourth-century funerary inscriptions, a circle surrounding a tau-rho is also a common motif.[130] However, only one datable inscription, from 397 CE, features a tau-rho within a wreath.[131] This inscription from Rome is interesting as it contains a chi-rho within the text and

[128] In chronological order, see *ICUR* 6025 (365 CE); *ILCV* 2945A = *ICUR* 1436 (378 CE); *ILCV* 2970 = *ICUR* 17497 (389 CE); *ICUR* 15778 (395 CE); and *ILCV* 3444 = *ICUR* 941 (397).
[129] In chronological order, see *ILCV* 2944 = *ICUR* 12530 (370); *ILCV* 4351 = *ICUR* 2809 (371 CE); *ILCV* 1515 = *ICUR* 12532 (377 CE); *ILCV* 4378 (378 CE); *ICUR* 4166 (380 CE); *ILCV* 3797C = *ICUR* 17482 (383 CE); *CIL VIII* 20412 = *ILCV* 2442 (384 CE); *ICUR* 1441 (385 CE); *ICUR* 3177 (386 CE); *ILCV* 2795C (4146D) = *ICUR* 6045 (388 CE); *ICUR* 1355 (392 CE); *ICUR* 8429 (393 CE); *ILCV* 2606 = *ICUR* 6053 (395 CE); *ILCV* 2926 addendum (395 CE); *ICUR* 15778 (395 CE); *CIL IX* 1363 = *ILCV* 102 = *ICUR* 18802 (possibly 400 CE); *ICUR* 6062 (401? CE); and *ILCV* 808 = *ICUR* 20815 (408 CE). *ICUR* 1355 also contains the image of a fish and *ILCV* 808 has what is postulated to be a comb.
[130] It occurs on 16% of the inscriptions. See *CIL* II 1726 (third century); ILCV 4351 = *ICUR* 2809 (371 CE); *ILCV* 2945A = *ICUR* 1436 (378 CE); *CIL II.14.4* 2095 (393 CE); and *ICUR* 15778 (395 CE).
[131] *ILCV* 3444 (166) = *ICUR* 941.

two tau-rhos, one within the text as well and the other below the writing in a wreath. The inscription reads:

> *dulcis et innoces hic dormit Severianus ⸸ in somnio pacis | qui uixit annus (sic) p(lus) m(inus) L cuius spiritus in luce domini suscep|tus est ⸸ die VIII X K(a)l(endas) mart(ias) DD(ominis) nn(ostris) Flavio Caesario et Nonio Attico | uu(iris) c(larissimis) c(on)s(ulibu)s quem locum emit Viricunda ux<x>or (sic) Pascasio ep(is)c(opo)*
>
> Here rests sweet and innocent Severianus in the sleep of peace, who lived (more or less) fifty years, and whose spirit was received in the light of the lord 18 days before the Kalends of March, during the consulship of our lords Flavius Caesarius and Nonius Atticus, illustrious men. This is the location (of his burial), which his wife, Viricunda, bought during the bishopric of Pascasius.
>
> *ILCV* 3444 (166) = *ICUR* 941

The Severianus epitaph is one of the most explicitly Christian epitaphs we have encountered thus far. It not only lists the name, age, and death of the deceased, but it also mentions his peaceful rest, the Lord receiving his spirit, and a bishop. An earlier inscription on a sarcophagus from Spoletium (in Umbria, Italy) also contains both symbols, but the deceased's devotion to Christianity is less explicit.[132] In both instances, the chi-rho and the tau-rho are not modifying any words but appear as freestanding, decorative elements.

These inscriptions are not the first instances of the tau-rho and chi-rho appearing together. The first datable example from my dataset of the symbols appearing simultaneously in a funerary inscription comes from Rome and dates to 380 CE.[133] A few other examples, including a couple from outside Rome, also highlight this type of combined usage.[134] The

[132] *CIL XI* 4968 = *ILCV* 2169. The inscription begins: *accipiter sancti uobis* (divine entities, receive (him) to you!). The six-month-old child, for whom the inscription was made, is being dedicated to ambiguous entities (see Vermaseren & van Essen 1965: 226, ft. 9).
[133] *ICUR* 4166. Another inscription from Rome (*ILCV* 2944 = *ICUR* 12530), which dates even earlier, to 370 CE, might be the first datable instance of the two symbols appearing on the same epitaph. However, one of the symbols is described as a tau flanked by an alpha and omega in the *ILCV* and *ICUR*. Since it is unclear if the engraver intended to make a tau-rho rather than a tau, it is not reliable evidence for the use of the two symbols together.
[134] See *CIL XI* 4968 = *ILCV* 2169 (from Spoletium); *ILCV* 2970 = *ICUR* 17497 (from Rome); *CIL II.*14.4 2095 (from Tarragona); and *ILCV* 2606 = *ICUR* 6053 (from Rome).

presence of both symbols together in a single inscription might indicate that those who commissioned the epitaphs perceived a difference in the semiotic meaning of each symbol, a theory that has come up periodically throughout this dissertation and I explore in greater detail in Chapter 8.

Several evident differences from the datable inscriptions within this dataset make the tau-rho distinguishable from the chi-rho in funerary inscriptions. Firstly, the tau-rho is used more frequently with Greek inscriptions.[135] Secondly, it is found less frequently in a corrupted form than the chi-rho.[136] Thirdly, as seen with the Severianus inscription, the tau-rho appears on datable inscriptions more explicitly created under Christian patronage: mentioning money owed to the Church,[137] finding peace in the cross,[138] and baptism.[139] These differences will be explored in more detail in the conclusion of this chapter and more thoroughly – by tying multiple strands of evidence together – in the chapters to follow.

In conclusion of this section, it appears that after an initial period of use, especially in New Testament manuscripts (see Chapter 3), the tau-rho disappears off of funerary inscriptions to re-emerge in the second half of the fourth century, when the Valentinian dynasty takes over from the Constantinian. Even though most datable funerary inscriptions in this data sample have a chi-rho, the tau-rho is more explicitly linked with the Christian religion, appearing more frequently with the alpha and omega and with mentions of the Church. Having established some differences between the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho on datable inscriptions, I will now

[135] For the datable inscriptions only, see *ICUR* 15420; *IGC* 100 = *ICUR* 4271b; and *IGC* 115 = *ILCV* 4458 = *ICUR* 2092.
[136] *ILCV* 2945A = *ICUR* 1436 and *ICUR* 6062. In both cases, it is found upside-down.
[137] *ILCV* 3835B. The inscription on this sarcophagus is very fragmentary, but one part reads: *eklesiae s(upra) s(criptae) argenti dec*[*e*]*m*.
[138] *ICUR* 2108. This inscription uses the tau-rho as an abbreviation for the Greek word cross (σταυρός), attaching it to the letter S. It reads in part: [*benemren*]*ti in pace s(tau-rho).*
[139] *ILCV* 1515 = *ICUR* 12532. The inscription states: [*ca*]*elesti renatus [aq]ua*.

examine all the 'Christian' inscriptions of Rome to glean more information about the use of these two symbols in purportedly Christian contexts.

6.4 A Case Study of the 'Christian' Inscriptions from Rome

This brief study of Rome's 'Christian' inscriptions examines a larger sample of all broadly dated inscriptions with chi-rhos and tau-rhos found in the *ICUR*. Although the majority of these inscriptions have been insecurely dated – through context and stylistic means – to the fourth century, it is imperative to note that the inscriptions used to generate these statistics have a date range from the second century until the end of the seventh.[140] Despite extending beyond the fourth century, this analysis is important as it presents an overview of the use of the tau-rho and chi-rho in inscriptions from the city and its environs – the area where archaeologists have most frequently found inscriptions with the symbols. Therefore, I have included it to provide a basis of comparison for the data that I have already presented. Before continuing, however, it is important to outline several key details and potential limitations about the data that follows. Firstly, the determination of which inscriptions were included in the corpora as 'Christian' was the decision of the editor, de Rossi.

Furthermore, very fragmentary inscriptions have entries in the *ICUR*; sometimes, all that remains is some form of iconography (such as doves, palms, tau-rhos, and chi-rhos). These fragments were not included in this study, for it is difficult to glean much information from what

[140] As an idea of how many inscriptions date beyond the fourth century, we can examine the securely datable inscriptions found in the *ICUR*. There are 141 (87.58%) inscriptions dated to the fourth century, whereas only 20 (12.42%) are from the fifth or sixth centuries. If we apply these numbers to the inscriptions in the *ICUR* that are not datable, we can gather that around 12% of the inscriptions discussed in this section date to later than the fourth century. For reference, the latest inscription in the *ICUR* with either a chi-rho or a tau-rho dates between 565 and 578 CE (*ICUR* 13415, which features a tau-rho).

survives. Those inscriptions where the inclusion of the chi-rho or tau-rho was uncertain were also not included to be as consistent across variables as possible. These limitations considered together denote that caution must be taken when considering the following statistics. Any numbers or percentages presented in this section may very well be slightly skewed, especially since some numbers in the *ICUR*, like those very fragmentary pieces, are further subdivided either numerically or alphabetically, meaning that the number of total inscriptions is larger than the total number of inscriptions I used for my results.[141] However, since this is a large data sample, the statistics should not be overly distorted.

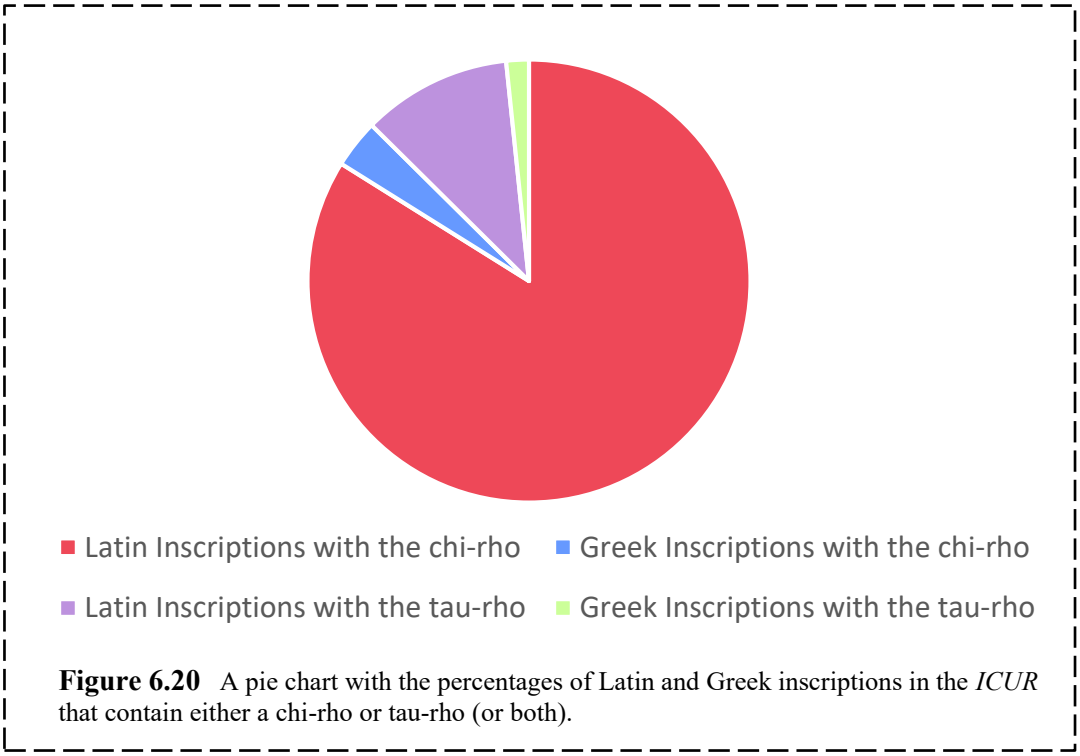

Figure 6.20 A pie chart with the percentages of Latin and Greek inscriptions in the *ICUR* that contain either a chi-rho or tau-rho (or both).

There are approximately 27688 inscriptions in the ten volumes of the *ICUR*. Of these inscriptions, 2146 (7.75%) contain a tau-rho, a chi-rho, or both.[142] Latin inscriptions (2066 = 96.27%) vastly outnumber Greek inscriptions (113 = 5.27%) and proportionally the chi-rho is

[141] For example, see 3979.1-3979.3 and 21565a-21565y.
[142] Twenty-four of the inscriptions have both a chi-rho and a tau-rho.

found on significantly more inscriptions than the tau-rho (88.59% > 12.58%). The pie chart in **Figure 6.20** enumerates the percentages of Latin and Greek inscriptions that contain either a tau-rho or a chi-rho. Although it is not evident in the graph, the tau-rho is found in proportionally more Greek inscriptions than the chi-rho (15.15% > 4.2%).[143] This result is significant, as it conforms to what was found with the smaller sample of datable inscriptions from the whole empire seen earlier in this chapter (see also Appendix B).

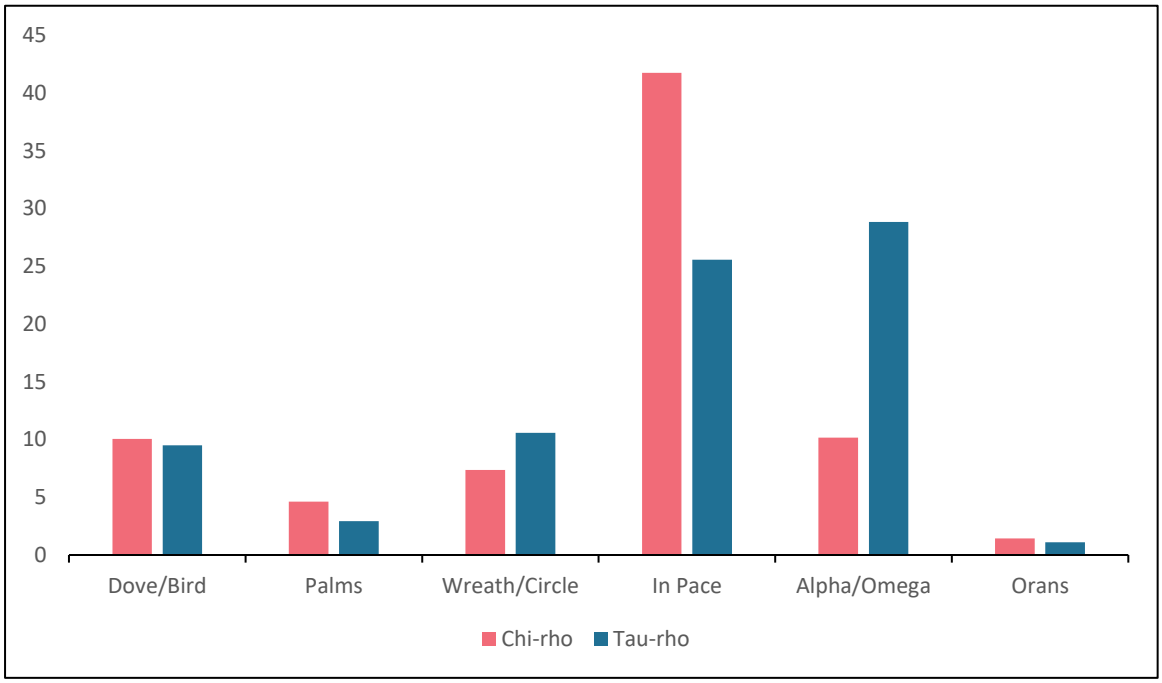

Figure 6.21 A graphic representation of the percentages of chi-rhos and tau-rhos used in inscriptions from Rome with other common 'Christian' motifs.

Several thematic motifs occur in the *ICUR* inscriptions that have been explored in detail in earlier sections of this chapter. The graph in **Figure 6.21** presents the proportion of tau-rhos and chi-rhos with these common motifs on the 'Christian' inscriptions from Rome. There are two uses of the iconographic motifs where the chi-rho and tau-rho differ significantly: the alpha and omega and the expression *in pace*. The alpha and omega occur 19.27% more frequently with the

[143] These percentages were tabulated by dividing the percentage of Greek versus Latin inscriptions for both the chi-rho (3.59%/85.18%) and the tau-rho (1.68%/11.09%).

tau-rho (80 of 270 inscriptions) than with the chi-rho (197 of 1902 inscriptions). This result is not simply an increase in the frequency of the alpha and omega as a device over time and into the fifth century. Even though the tau-rho became increasingly more popular as a symbol, inscriptions also featured the chi-rho well into the sixth century,[144] and the total number of instances of the symbols on inscriptions securely datable to the fifth and sixth centuries is comparable.[145] Despite this, the latest *ICUR* example of the chi-rho with the alpha and omega dates to 409 CE.[146] Since the chi-rho flanked by the alpha and omega began to be used towards the end of the Constantinian dynasty, the imagery only appeared in inscriptions for the span of a couple of generations. The increased occurrence of the alpha and omega, a Christian motif before the fourth century,[147] with the tau-rho further solidifies the interpretation of the tau-rho as a Christian symbol. As discussed in Chapter 2, those ancient viewers without knowledge of the meaning behind the signs would have been unable to interpret them. The alpha and omega would have helped guide the correct – if we can label any interpretation 'correct' since everyone's experience slightly alters a sign's meaning – understanding of the tau-rho.

In addition, I hypothesize that there could be a Theodosian link between the alpha and omega motif and the tau-rho, which – as I established in the last chapter – may have been a Theodosian dynastic monogram. Garipzanov argues that the alpha and omega motif symbolized

[144] The latest securely dated use of the chi-rho in the *ICUR* (no. 5053) is found on a funerary inscription from the Via Ostiensis, dated to 530 CE.
[145] By the 5th century, the number of datable inscriptions with a chi-rho drops significantly (5 inscriptions in the ICUR) and the alpha and omega is only used with the chi-rho in one datable 5th century instance. The chi-rho is not found on any datable 6th century inscriptions. The tau-rho, on the other hand, continues to be used consistently in the 5th (8 datable inscriptions) and 6th centuries (7 datable inscriptions). However, the use of the alpha and omega with the tau-rho in inscriptions also fades (found in only 2 fifth-century examples). For chi-rhos see *ICUR* 943; 1473; 4054; 4852; 4926; 5053; 5717; 6061; 6066; 10854; 11151; 15356; 17544; and 19981. For tau-rhos see *ICUR* 735; 4285; 4890; 5732; 6062; 6074; 6081; 10855; 11157; 11174; 12255; 13415; 17554; 17610; 19988; 20815; and 23451.
[146] *ICUR* 17544.
[147] Watts (2014), 159. Thomas (1981: 89) states the alpha and omega may have been used verbally in Jewish-Christian circles from the first century CE.

Nicene orthodoxy versus Arianism.[148] If the imperial family of the emperor Theodosius I – who passed a law deeming Christian sects (other than Nicene) heretical – propagated the tau-rho within this religious milieu, there would have been a stronger association between the symbol (as a reference to the Theodosians) and the alpha and omega motif (as a reference to orthodoxy).

On the other hand, the expression *in pace* occurs in inscriptions with the chi-rho (798 of 1902 inscriptions) 16.77% more often than with the tau-rho (68 of 270 inscriptions). Although this is a significant percentage, the expression itself is only directly attached to the symbol in 13.28% (106 inscriptions) of those occurrences.[149] We have already encountered this phenomenon in the inscription from 323 CE (see above), where the chi-rho was separate from the *in pace* formula. There is only one datable example, from 366 CE, in the *ICUR* that has '*in pace* ☧ *'* within the text of the inscription.[150] For most of the inscriptions with *in pace,* the chi-rho appears elsewhere on the inscription as a freestanding symbol. One notable example, which comes from the catacombs on the Via Appia, reads:

> ☧ *dul(ci) venemer[en]ti (sic) Victori* ☧ *| fil[i]o paren[t]es qu[i] {a}m<a>ria | treiecit vi(xi)t d(ies) LXXX neofitus | qu[i] vi[x](it) in pace X(risti)*
>
> His parents (made this) for their sweet, well-deserving son Victor, who went across the seas, lived eighty days as a neophyte (a newly converted Christian), who lived in the peace of Christ.
>
> *ICUR* 13226

[148] Garipzanov (2018), 68. He explains that this is why the alpha and omega appeared on the coins of Magnentius: as a way of distinguishing his orthodox beliefs compared to those of Constantius II.
[149] When the chi-rho is combined with *in pace,* it can occur before the expression; after the expression; or, occasionally, between the expression. Sometimes, the formula *in pace in (chi-rho)* is used. For the various iterations of *in pace* attached to a chi-rho, see *ICUR* 1204; 1291; 1300; 1365; 1629; 1791; 2002; 2045.2; 2176; 2302; 2634; 2675; 2912; 2932; 3023; 3291; 3307; 3370; 3409; 3436; 3447; 3470; 3495; 3547; 3571; 3661; 3663; 3686; 3702; 3742; 3780; 3791.2; 3821; 3827; 3867; 4265; 4381; 4474; 4687; 5581; 5846; 5959; 6101; 6148; 6164; 6298; 6656; 6819; 6979; 7003; 7112; 7576; 7869; 8015; 8016a; 8016b; 8723; 8814; 8910; 8933; 9162; 9193; 9196; 9980; 10474a; 10474b; 10474c; 11955; 11968; 12025; 12041; 12335; 12337a; 12470; 12485; 12623; 12677; 13967; 14079; 14412; 14895a; 15648; 15687; 16033; 16623; 16903; 17153a; 17195; 17274; 17325; 17822; 18080; 18391; 18460; 19178; 19217; 19382; 19502; 19529; 19554; 20122; 20668; 20732; 21359; 21462a; 21705; 23154; 23159; 23600; 23795; 24051; 25314.
[150] *ICUR* 8723.

Although the chi-rho appears twice on this inscription, it is not used after '*in pace'* (see **Figure 6.22**). Furthermore, the word 'Christ' is abbreviated with an 'X' rather than a chi-rho. The Latin is of poor quality, with several missing letters and spelling mistakes, which might explain why the engraver chose an 'X' as the abbreviation for Christ rather than a chi-rho. However, since two chi-rhos were used elsewhere on the epitaph, it seems as though the use of an 'X' was a deliberate choice by the engraver. This inscription is one of the clearest examples indicating that the chi-rho was not always used as a direct replacement word for 'Christ' in inscriptions.[151] Secondly, it is also important to note that the phrase '*in pace'* does not necessarily identify inscriptions as 'Christian.' While Christians undoubtedly made the expression widespread, Borg indicates that it was also employed in Jewish inscriptions and posits that other non-Christian groups also used it.[152] She argues that scholars should not always assume Christian patronage because of the formula's inclusion on epitaphs. The chi-rho with *in pace* is not conclusively – or strictly – Christian, a theme that I will explore in further detail in the next chapter.

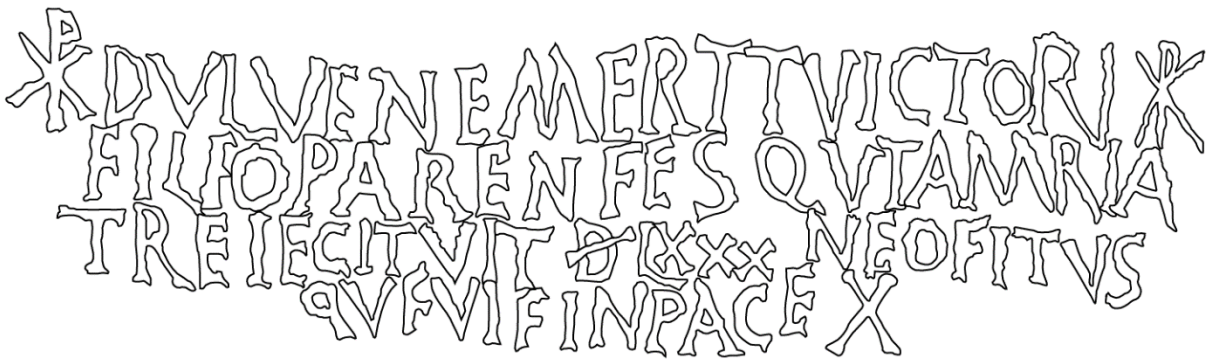

Figure 6.22 The epitaph of Victor from the catacombs on the Via Appia (*ICUR* 13226). Two chi-rhos appear at either end of the first line. ca. middle of the 4th – middle of the 5th century CE. Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 1740)

[151] The word Christ is not always replaced in inscriptions, even when chi-rhos are present. For some examples, see *ICUR* 3314; 9259; 15868; and 17389.
[152] Borg (2013), 267-269.

Figure 6.23 A Greek inscription from the Via Latina, Rome (*ICUR* 15868). A chi-rho appears at the bottom of the inscription as a freestanding symbol. ca. end of 4th century CE. Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 7976)

Another example from Rome – this time on a Greek inscription that dates to circa mid-fourth century – further indicates that some chose not to implement the chi-rho for the purposes of abbreviating the word Christ.[153] The epitaph, which comes from the Via Latina (see **Figure 6.23**), is explicitly Christian. It reads:

> *οὔνομά μοι Βάσσος, πάτρη δὲ πόλις Βαβυλῶνος, | Χριστοῦ δ' αὐ προπόλων εἰμί ται κὲ γενόμαν· | σῶμα κἀμὸν δὲ λιπὼν γαίῃ βίοτον δὲ βροτί[οις] | ἦλθον ἐς οὐρανίην ἀτραπὸν καὶ δώματα Χριστο[ῦ] | λίψανα μὲν Βάσσοιο κατὰ χθονὸς, ἡ δὲ πρὸς αἴθραν | ψυχὴ πωτηθεῖσα μόλεν αἰς αἰθέρα Χριστοῦ*
>
> My name is Bassos. My home is the city of Babylon. I lived and I became one of the ministers of Christ; Having left my body to the land, life for mortals, I came to the heavenly road and the house of Christ. Bassos' body is under the earth; but his soul, having flown into the air, came to the heaven of Christ.
>
> *ICUR* 15868

The epitaph of Bassos, a priest from Babylon (the city near Cairo, Egypt), mentions that his body has remained in the earth while his soul has gone to heaven.[154] Although Christ is mentioned

[153] For the date of the inscription, see *SEG* 18, 425 and *SEG* 37, 808.
[154] See *SEG* (37, 808) for the location of Babylon. For more information on the contrast of body and soul in Christian epitaphs from the catacombs, see Denzey Lewis (2020: 143).

throughout this inscription, the chi-rho that appears on it is not used as an abbreviation of his name; instead, it appears more prominent than the rest of the text as a freestanding device separating the two blocks of text. The engraver (or patron) of the inscription opted to keep the symbol separate from the rest of the inscription, and I postulate that this imbues the symbol with more mystical meaning than a simple monogram read with the rest of the text, especially since the symbol stands alone and is larger than the rest of the writing. As an abbreviation within the text, the ancient viewer reads the chi-rho as 'Christ.' As a freestanding symbol, it holds semiotic messages beyond the word: it is a Christian apotropaic symbol.

Another example, insecurely dated to the beginning of the fourth century, comes from the catacomb of Domitilla. A chi-rho appears in a Greek inscription as one motif alongside an anchor with an ankh-handle and a bird holding a branch in its beak (see **Figure 6.24**).[155] Although Jesus is directly mentioned in the inscription, the chi-rho does not follow the word (creating 'Jesus Christ') but is engraved at the top-right of the epitaph. The fact that the chi-rho was, in Greek-speaking communities, not originally a substitution of the word Christ (as we have already seen in Chapter 3) might be reflected in these two Greek inscriptions. Taken together with Latin inscriptions that similarly feature the chi-rho, they might also indicate that the symbol was not initially an abbreviation but an apotropaic token: a reference to the Constantinian dynasty and their military might, granted to them by divine (Christian) benefaction. One funerary inscription directly references Constantine's vision, stating that Sinfonia '*in hoc vinces.* '[156] The chi-rho appears in a circle below these words. The symbol is not only employed as a reminder of

[155] *ICUR* 7249 = *IGC* 509 = *ILCV* 2328. The inscription reads: *Δημητρις ετ Λεοντια | Σειρικε φειλιε βενεμερεν|τι μνησθης Ἰησους | ο κυριος τεκνον γλυκυν.* Although spelt with Greek letters, the inscription contains a mixture of Greek and Latin words. For more information on this phenomenon in this inscription, see Horsley 1987: 200.
[156] *ICUR* 8579.

the victory of Constantine and his family. Instead, its power as an apotropaic symbol extends beyond the dynastic and to the whole Roman population.

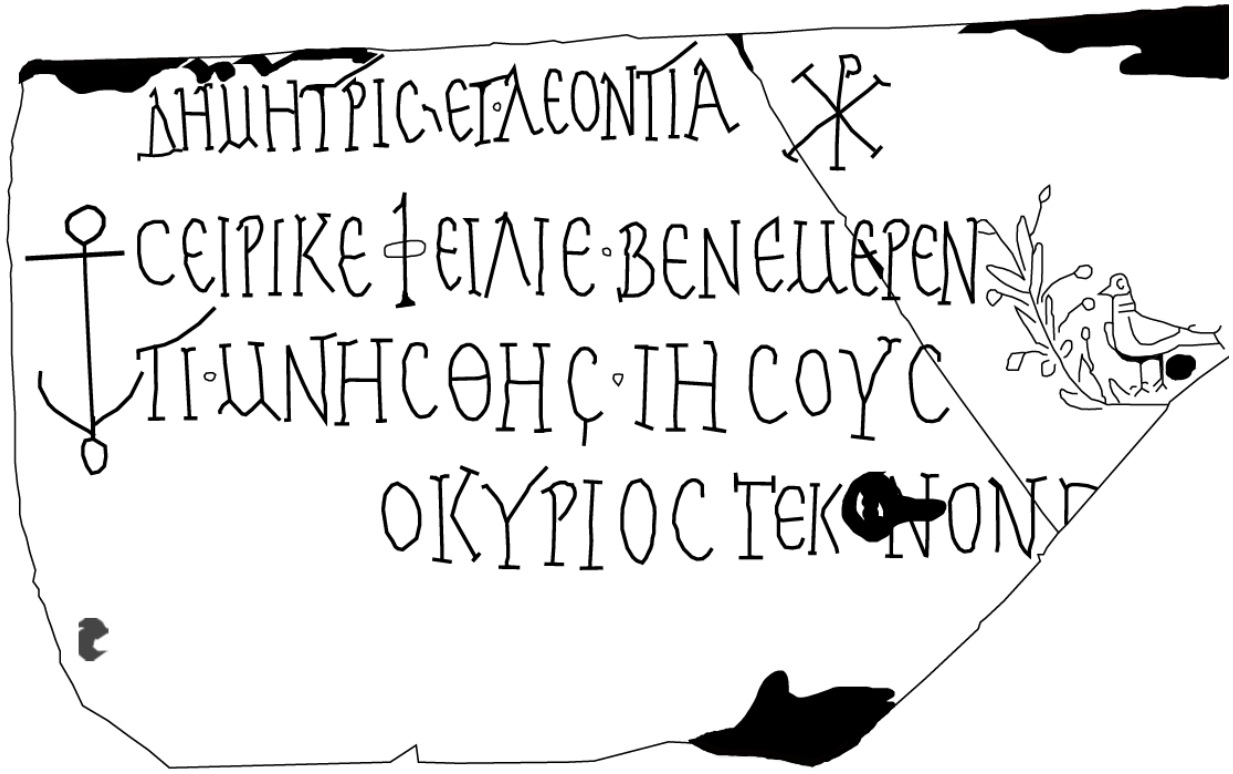

Figure 6.24 A Greek inscription from the catacomb of Domitilla (*ICUR* 7249 = *IGC* 509 = *ILCV* 2328). A chi-rho appears at the end of the first line of the inscription. ca. 290 – 340 CE. Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 22749)

Another motif that appears with both the chi-rho and the tau-rho is the figure of a praying person (*orans*). This iconography is the least common of all discussed so far, but sparse evidence indicates that *orantes* occur on inscriptions more frequently with chi-rhos than tau-rhos.[157] However, like the formula '*in pace,'* even though *orantes* became a popular form of Christian iconography, the motif was used previously in, and concurrently with, non-Christian milieus.[158] The *orantes* that appear on funerary inscriptions can be female or male, adults or children, and

[157] There are no securely datable examples in my dataset. For chi-rhos see *ICUR* 1501; 1672; 1780; 1783; 1841; 2026; 2971; 4456; 5962; 7083c; 7722; 8410b; 9081; 9104; 10421; 12073; 12467; 14372; 15376; 16457; 18589; 20074; 21099c; 22394; 23030; 23269; and 23527. For tau-rhos see *ICUR* 9081; 9166; and 18530.
[158] Barasch (1997), 61-62.

the sex of the *orans* usually matches the sex of the deceased person, which suggests that *orantes* found on funerary inscriptions are likely images of the deceased themselves.

While the *orans* is the most common type of figural iconography found on funerary inscriptions in Rome, several other figured motifs, such as *protomes*, were also used.[159] As with the *orantes*, figures can be either male or female and frequently reflect the sex of the deceased. One notable exception depicts the image of a female *orans* – likely the deceased Victoria mentioned in the inscription – above whom is a chi-rho, flanked by two unnamed male *protomes*, possibly the apostles Peter and Paul (see **Figure 6.25**).[160] Because this inscription is not securely dated, we cannot know when the chi-rho came to be associated with the apostles Peter and Paul. As we shall see in the next chapter, this iconography is established on other types of finds, such as gold glass. Although those examples cannot be securely dated either, they provide evidence of the use of the chi-rho with other Christian imagery. I contend – based on the evidence found in this chapter that early uses of the chi-rho fall on the spectrum of meaning more towards 'imperial' rather than 'religious' imagery – that the use of the chi-rho with images of the apostles begins towards the latter half of the fourth century.

Figure 6.25 A funerary inscription for Victoria from Rome (*ICUR* 1783). A chi-rho appears above a female *orans*. Two busts, possibly the apostles Peter and Paul, flank the chi-rho. ca. beginning to middle of 5th century CE.
Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 31651)

[159] For figural scenes with a chi-rho see *ICUR* 2624; 3888; 4372; 5194; 6026; 9524; 12185; 12872d; 13197; 14118b; 15391; 20198; and 21939. For tau-rhos, see *ICUR* 3653; and 15960.
[160] *ICUR* 1783. The images of the apostles Peter and Paul are found on two other epitaphs from Rome (*ICUR* 1513 and 20018). As with *ICUR* 1783, the chi-rhos used in these inscriptions are beside the images of the apostles.

In summary, the epitaphs from Rome provide additional evidence to those inscriptions described throughout this chapter. Although it is difficult to say with any certainty, since the potential dates of the inscriptions can differ by centuries, it appears as though some of the trends found in the securely datable evidence from the fourth century are more broadly applicable to all inscriptions with a chi-rho or tau-rho. I will conclude with a few observations that tie together all of the threads of information given throughout this chapter.

6.5 Concluding Observations

There are many ways in which the chi-rho was implemented on funerary inscriptions. On most of the epitaphs examined, the symbol appears apart from the main inscription and is not a direct substitution for the word 'Christ' within the text. This result is a direct contrast to the conclusions reached by Garipzanov, who claims that the earliest use of the chi-rho in a funerary context is as a direct abbreviation of Christ's name, citing the funerary inscription of 323 CE (see above).[161] There are instances where the symbol functions as a seemingly straightforward monogram of the word 'Christ': such as *in* ☧,[162] *in nomine* ☧, [163] *vivas in* ☧,[164] *(vivas) in deo* ☧,[165] and *I(esus)* ☧.[166] But although these formulae are used, with the first securely dated example dating to 348 CE, they are the exception rather than the rule. For example, the formula

[161] Garipzanov (2018), 56.
[162] *ICUR* 538; 607; 827; 1204; 1289; 1365; 3023; 3495; 3575; 3589; 3673; 3824; 4381; 4486; 5846; 6101; 6124; 6506; 7101; 8814; 8910; 9189; 10280; 10876; 11874; 11926; 12025; 12566; 13094; 14079; 14088; 14406; 14412; 15687; 15986; 16305; 17129; 17167; 18257b; 18585; 18668; 19502; 19511; 19768; 20026; 20122; 20619; 21034; 21075; 21101; 21359; 21705; 21962; 22266; 22480; 22607; 23031; and 23269.
[163] *ICUR* 1791; 1799; 1900; and 3895.
[164] *ICUR* 3547; 15962a; 15962c; 16239; 17391; 18839; and 19295.
[165] *ICUR* 1982; 2045.2; 3547; 5412; 17195; 18693; and 21313.
[166] *ICUR* 4589; 7063; and 8518.

(vivas) in deo is found far more frequently without the chi-rho,[167] or – if the chi-rho is present – it is more often a freestanding device elsewhere on the inscription.[168] Even though inscriptions using the chi-rho as a substitute for the word Christ are rare,[169] their presence does indicate that by the middle of the fourth century, some in Rome, whether it was the patron of the epitaph or the engraver himself, could recognize a distinction between the use of the chi-rho in the *labarum* as a symbol of the imperial family and the chi-rho as a monogram of the word Christ. This awareness of the distinction is not to say that the symbol could not hold both – or, perhaps, even multiple – meanings simultaneously, but the chi-rho simply as an abbreviation device is a less common and generally later employment of the symbol.

A second outcome that can be gleaned from this survey is the different uses of the chi-rho and the tau-rho in inscriptions.[170] We have already seen examples of their differences when combined with the alpha and omega and the formula '*in pace*.' Another dissimilarity is that the tau-rho is extremely rarely employed after the preposition '*in*' (see Ch. 6, fn. 162 for examples of the chi-rho after '*in*').[171] Those few instances where the tau-rho is found after 'in' might indicate some confusion existed over the differences in meaning between the symbols, especially with the

[167] Some examples from the *ICUR* include*:* 194; 327; 389; 682; 1409; 1626; 1796; 1797; 2011a; 2435; 3101; 3148; 3312; 3530; 3786; 4672; 6134; 6163b; 6187; 6220; 6449.24; 6449.29; 3449.31; 6478; 6721; 6727; 6931; 6983; 7068a; 8268; 8965; 9140; 9168; 9375a; 9462; 9539g; 9700; 9723; 9801; 10070; 10132; 10284; 10349a; 10349b; 10978; 11516a; 11516b; 12094b; 12094c; 12961a; 12961b; 12973; 13031b; 10494; 14663; 15524; 15558; 15598; 15939.4; 15979.12; 15981.6; 16291; 16424; 16629; 17786; 17790; 18114; 18642; 18665a; 18756; 18912; 18919; 19303; 19434; 19475; 19693; 20212b; 20424; 20547; 20696; 21980; 22445; 22668; 22705; 23008; 23279; 23793; 23811b; 23895; 23993; 24131; 24201; 24239; 24363; 24842.2; 24843.4; 24908; 24914; 24961; 25126; 25332; 25361; 25451; 25650; 25783; 25804a; 25804b; 25805c; 25805d; 25806b; 26323; 26329; 26351; 26361; 26460; 26690; 26895; 27083; and 27143.
[168] *ICUR* 1668; 3146; 9801; 11863; 15524; 15939; 17116; 18517; 19107; and 20698.
[169] Care should always be taken when assuming that the chi-rho is standing in for the word Christ in an inscription. For example, *ICUR* 7063 is transcribed: *cr<e>dedit | [in Ies]u Chr(isto) vix(it) an(nos)*. However, what the editors took as a 'u' for the word Iesu shows no indication of being attached to a word at all and, therefore, the letter reading is doubtful. The chi-rho appears in the middle of the inscription, as often occurs when it is a freestanding symbol. Therefore, it is unlikely that the symbol is being supplemented for the word Christ in the text of the inscription.
[170] I explore this topic – and the scholarship surrounding it – in more detail in Chapter 8.
[171] See *ICUR* 4609; 12473; 15405; and 23594.

tau-rho eventually supplanting the chi-rho in inscriptions. However, there is no reason to assume the intended meaning behind this use of the tau-rho was not the word 'cross.'[172] In any case, all of these examples demonstrate that in inscriptions, the tau-rho did not have as much of a breadth of potential uses as did the chi-rho.

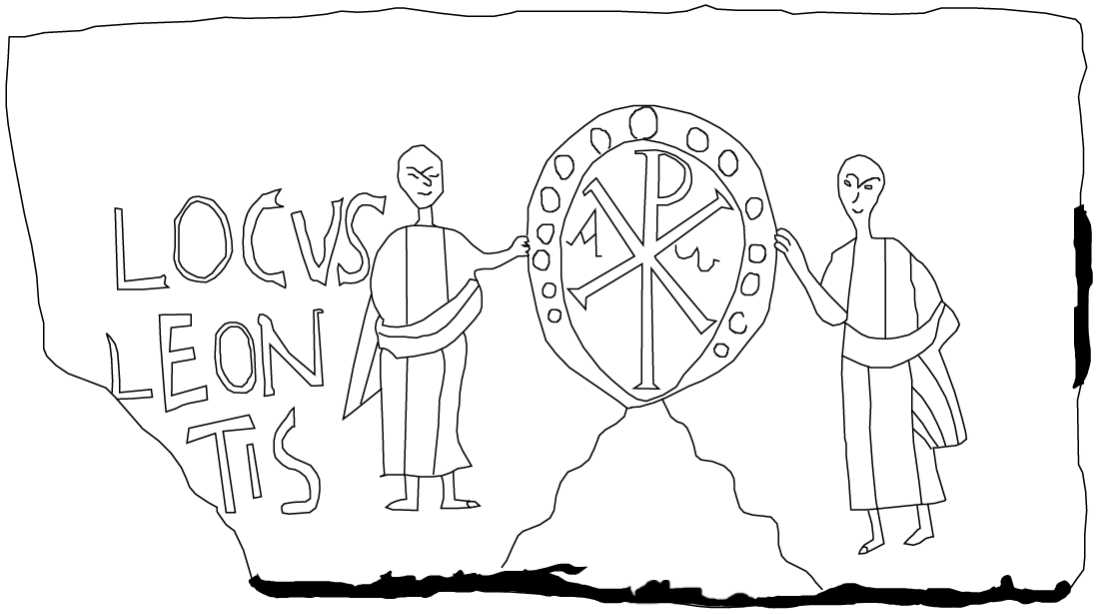

Figure 6.26 A funerary inscription from Naples, Italy (*ICUR* 2852). A chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and omega, appears in a wreath that is held by two men. ca. late 4th – early 5th century CE. Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 32772)

Finally, this survey provides insight into how the chi-rho's early development on coins influenced its use in inscriptions. One funerary inscription from Naples features a chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and omega, within a wreath. Two men hold the wreath between them (see **Figure 6.26**).[173] A second inscription, from the catacomb of Callixtus, depicts a bird, which is holding a writing instrument with its foot and inscribing a chi-rho (see **Figure 6.27**).[174] Both inscriptions share qualities with the coins we explored in Chapter 5 that feature Victory: the first

[172] For example, *ICUR* 23594 can also be read as: Paulinus, in the peace of the cross (*Paulinus | in P pace)*.
[173] *ICUR* 2852.
[174] *ICUR* 10783.

with those that feature two Victories holding a wreath inscribed with a *vota* surmounted by a chi-rho; and the second with those that have the image of Victory inscribing a chi-rho on a shield. In these inscriptions, Victory has been replaced by other motifs, thus removing the military connotation. In the first example, the chi-rho does not appear above the wreath but has replaced the *vota* itself. I believe this redirects the vow for a successful rule into hope for an afterlife for the deceased. The relationship between the evidence for the application of the chi-rho on coins and in inscriptions will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 7.

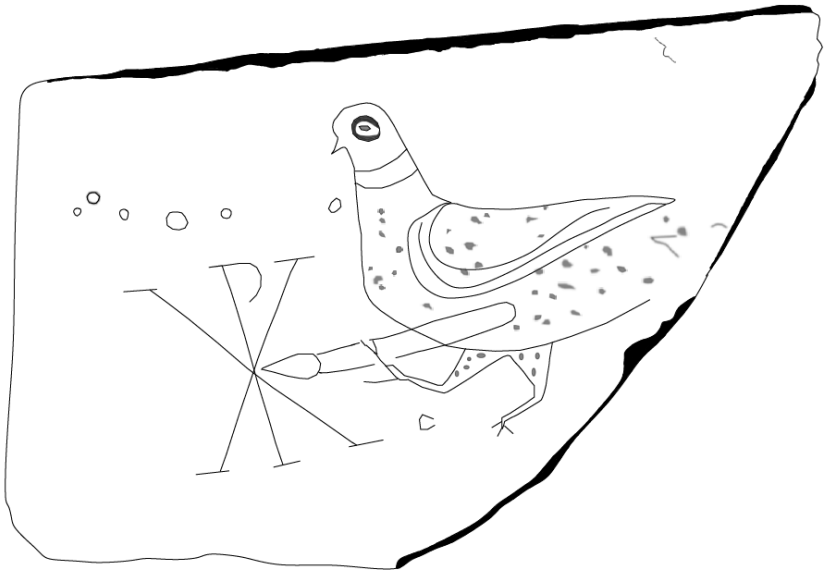

Figure 6.27 Funerary inscription from the catacomb of Callixtus (*ICUR* 10783). A bird inscribes a chi-rho with its foot. ca. 4th century CE. Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 38894)

Even though many of the inscriptions from Rome do not have consular dates, they still provide valuable evidence of the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho in both private and public inscriptions. The same is true for the inscriptions found throughout the rest of the empire. **Figures 6.28** and **6.29** (located at the end of this chapter on pages 338 and 339) are heat maps that show the concentration of inscriptions found in the *CIL* with chi-rhos and tau-rhos, respectively.[175] As **Figure 6.28** indicates, the highest concentrations of the chi-rho in inscriptions

[175] In order to produce the heat maps, I tracked each instance of a chi-rho or tau-rho for each volume of the *CIL*. The totals were then divided by the number of inscriptions in each volume. Even though it is likely that some of the numbers are skewed, the sample was large enough that any bias should be minimal.

outside of Rome are in the regions of Gaul and North Africa. The patterns of the tau-rho's use are similar, except that the symbol is not as prevalent in Cisalpine Gaul but is found in higher intensity in Spain (see **Figure 6.29**). Therefore, the data highlight that there is little geographic difference in the use of the symbols, and there does not seem to be any link between the levels of occurrences with particular Christian enclaves, imperial residences, or mints.[176] There is also no indication of a systematic spread in the use of the symbols. For instance, northern Italy has a lower percentage of use of the symbols than further afield. However, it is again important to remember that these results are constrained by where excavations have taken place and what researchers have published.

I began this chapter with a quote taken from Shakespeare's epitaph.[177] The quote exemplifies the inviolability of tombs and the invocation of religion for the protection of the deceased. Like the concern demonstrated in Shakespeare's epitaph from the 1600s, we have seen that ancient Romans, throughout the empire, had similar anxieties for their dead. Both the chi-rho and the tau-rho were placed in inscriptions as apotropaic talismans to help ward off theft and destruction. This chapter has asked two significant questions that have been present throughout my dissertation: firstly, was the chi-rho a symbol of the Christian religion when Constantine I first employed it; and secondly, are the chi-rho and tau-rho interchangeable symbols. The final two chapters focus on answering these questions with the evidence I have presented throughout my dissertation and demonstrate the apotropaic function of both symbols.

[176] Compare these heat maps with 'The Origins and Spread of Christianity to AD 600' map in the Atlas of World History (O'Brien 1999: 45).

[177] Shakespeare's tomb can be found at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK. For the text of the epitaph, see Corn (2011: 295). For more information on the epitaph, see Tomaini's chapter (2017: 155-186) interpreting his tomb, including the controversy surrounding whether or not Shakespeare wrote his own epitaph, in her book *The Corpse as Text: Disinterment and Antiquarian Enquiry, 1700-1900.*

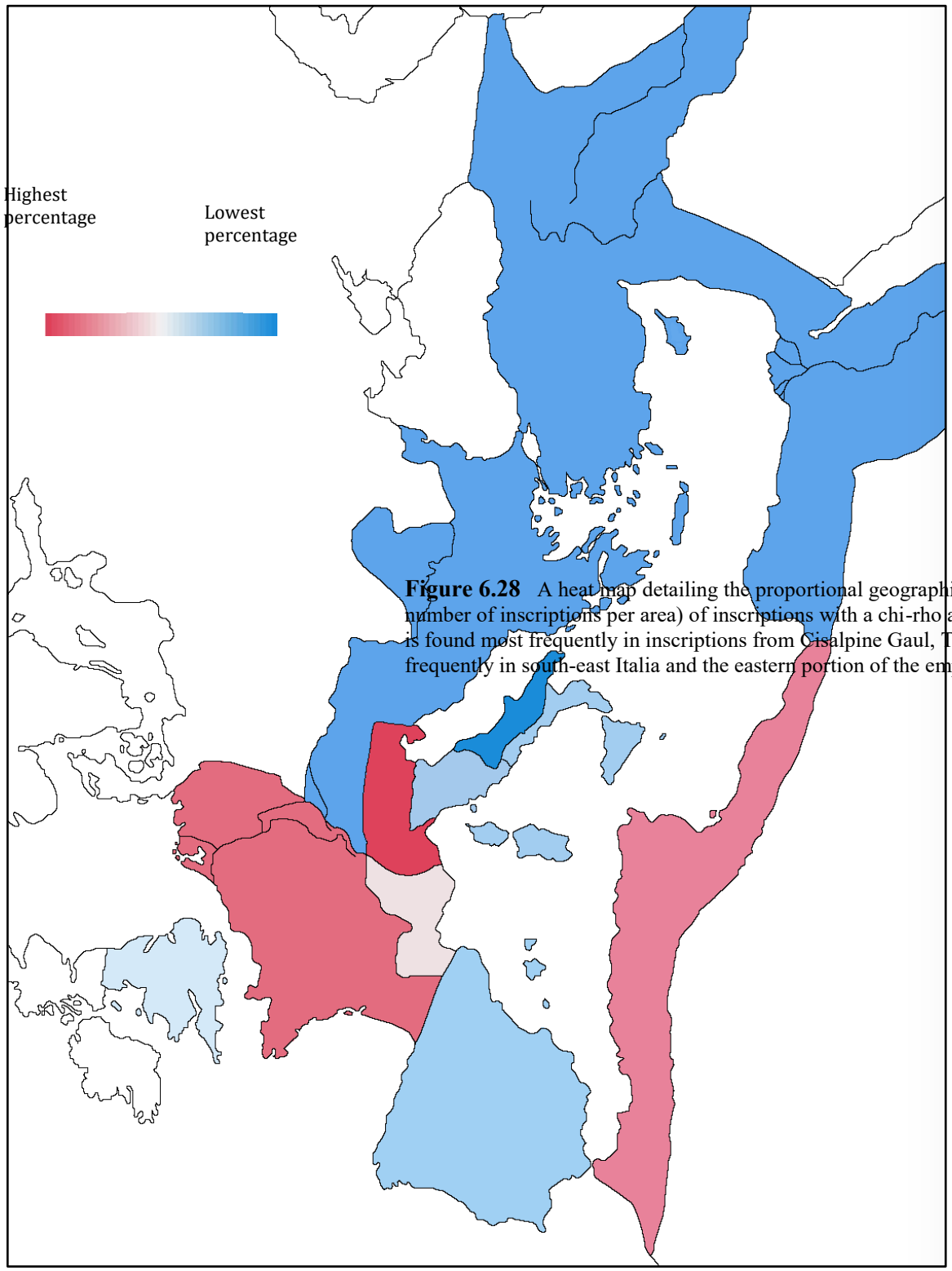

Figure 6.28 A heat map detailing the proportional geographical distribution (number of i
number of inscriptions per area) of inscriptions with a chi-rho across the Roman Empire, ex
is found most frequently in inscriptions from Cisalpine Gaul, Transalpine Gaul, Germania,
frequently in south-east Italia and the eastern portion of the empire (Asia, Aegyptus, Graeca

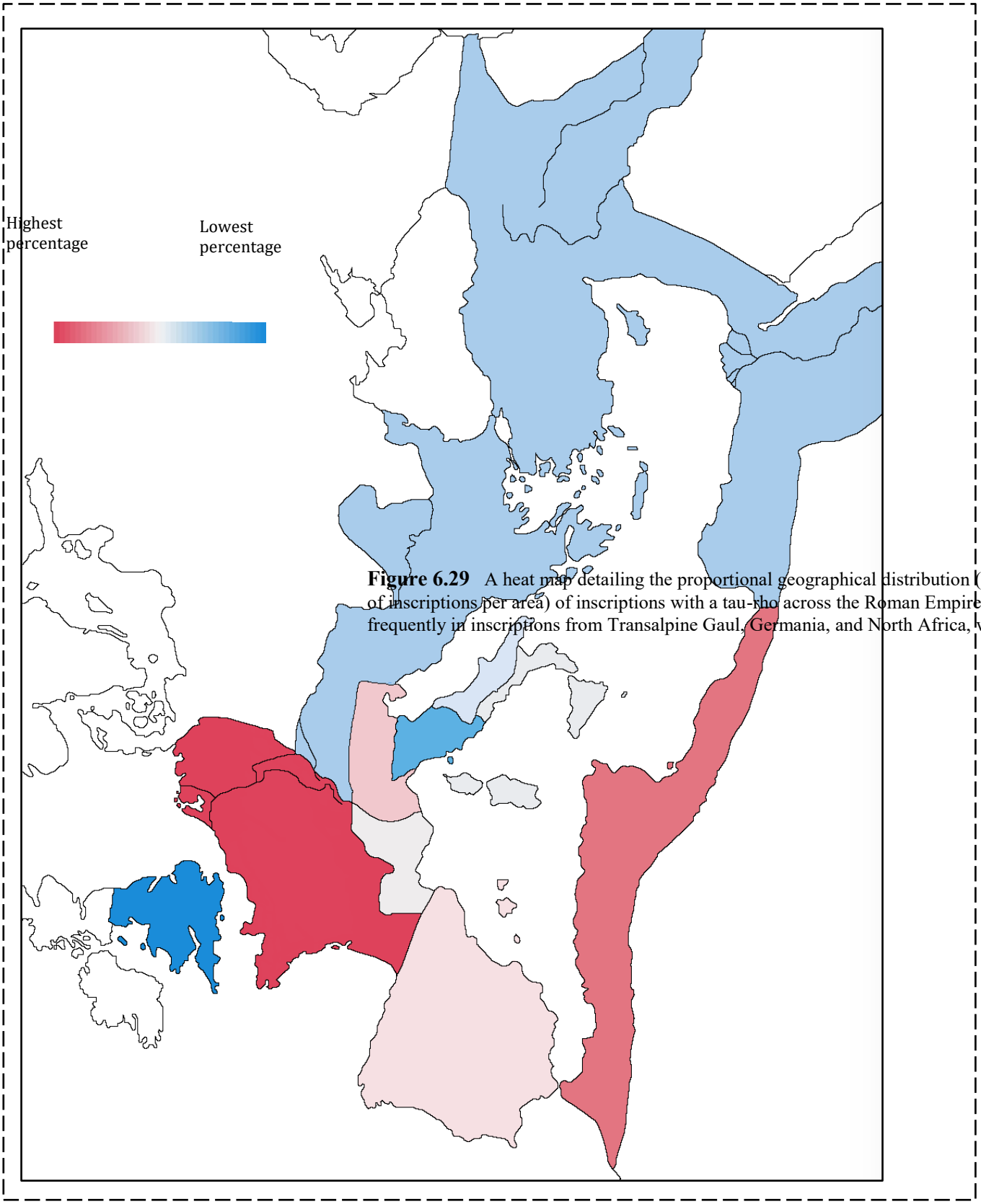

Figure 6.29 A heat map detailing the proportional geographical distribution (number of in
of inscriptions per area) of inscriptions with a tau-rho across the Roman Empire, excluding R
frequently in inscriptions from Transalpine Gaul, Germania, and North Africa, while it is fou

PART III

SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CHI-RHO: IMPERIAL MONOGRAM, SYMBOL FOR CHRIST, AND APOTROPAIC SIGN

Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past

George Orwell, *1984*

****

The third and final part of my dissertation provides a summary of the results compiled throughout Part II, which looked at the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho in pre-Constantinian contexts, in fourth-century literature, on fourth-century imperial coins, and in fourth-century inscriptions. While previous chapters have examined the evidence for both symbols in chronological order and – for the most part – by type of object, the final two chapters assess the chi-rho and the tau-rho separately by semiotic theme, including additional material evidence – some of it less certainly dated to the fourth century – that supplements the findings of Part II.

The supplemental material found in Chapters 7 and 8 has been chosen to be included for one of three reasons. First, the object features a well-known example of a chi-rho or tau-rho that scholars have used to interpret (and date) surrounding iconography (such as the Projecta casket or Hinton St Mary mosaic). Second, the object is part of a broader group of objects (such as gold glass or silver) that demonstrate and exemplify the themes found in Part II. And third, the object dates to the fourth century, either based on stylistic or other grounds (for example, through coins or stratigraphic means).

This chapter, divided into three sections, synthesizes and discusses the evidence gathered on the chi-rho in particular. Two of the sections – the symbol's dynastic and Christian significations – have been touched upon throughout my dissertation. The third section explores

the apotropaic uses of the chi-rho, a common thread of meaning that transcends both the dynastic and the Christian interpretations of the symbol throughout the fourth century. Before delving into these central themes, I will summarize several of the main findings from the preceding chapters that are pertinent to a discussion on the chi-rho.

In Chapter 3, the pre-Constantinian development of the chi-rho was explored. My examination established that long before the fourth century, the chi-rho existed as an abbreviation for certain Greek words, such as χρηστὸς 'useful,' χρυσός 'gold,' and χρ(ῶ) 'I attack/proclaim.' Although there were several suspected instances of the chi-rho in pre-Constantinian Christian contexts – discussed in Chapter 3– as we saw, all of them were unsubstantiated either by date or design. I concluded that the chi-rho had centuries of non-religious – and certainly non-Christian – semiotic signification by the time it was adopted by Constantine I. Although the evidence is sparse, the presence of the chi-rho as a critical mark on early papyri – even if the symbol was a later addition – and on Greek coins before the advent of Christianity is enough to demonstrate its early use as a non-Christian symbol.

When detailing the progress of the use of the chi-rho on Roman coins in Chapter 5, I concluded that the symbol was connected primarily to military iconography – as a feature of the *labarum* held by soldiers, emperors, and the personification Victory – and, in particular, the Constantinian dynasty. These findings support the evidence presented in Chapter 4, that the 'Constantinian' monogram was the chi-rho and not the tau-rho. Even though the chi-rho was not a popular device on Constantine I's coins, with the start of each new dynasty, there was an increase in the presence of the symbol on coins. This result supports the theory that the chi-rho was a dynastic symbol and a legitimatization device used by subsequent emperors in an attempt to connect their rule to the Constantinian dynasty. Finally, the results presented in Chapter 5

show that the chi-rho was minted on coins of different denominations, which meant that various classes of Romans would have come into contact with the symbol, thus increasing its semiotic 'viewership.'

Chapter 6 investigated the use of the chi-rho in fourth-century inscriptions. My thorough analysis of both funerary and non-funerary inscriptions from across the empire revealed that the chi-rho was initially used as a dynastic device. Despite the limited sample size – and the uneven and patchy nature of the evidence – the earliest datable examples we have of the chi-rho in inscriptions come from North African Constantinian milestones. While the number of North African milestones with a chi-rho seems insignificant in comparison to the total number of inscriptions found in *CIL VIII*, when we consider them as a group within the context of datable inscriptions, they represent an important use of the symbol in the early years of the fourth century. Indeed, it was only towards the middle of the fourth century that the chi-rho became a more frequent symbol on funerary inscriptions and, gradually, in more secure Christian contexts.

The results presented in Part II have raised several compelling questions, including: why is the chi-rho being used in certain ways in specific parts of the empire (such as the North Africa milestone examples)? Were particular social groups (elite versus poor; religious versus non-religious; soldiers versus commoners) using the chi-rho in distinct ways? Moreover, what does the evidence of the fourth-century use of the chi-rho on coins and in inscriptions tell us about the semiotic message behind the symbol? This chapter will explore these questions while introducing the above-mentioned new material evidence – not from coins or inscriptions – supporting my arguments. It is important to note that while I am – for the most part – tackling each topic distinctly, I by no means intend to imply that each possible meaning behind the chi-rho is a mutually exclusive entity; in fact, I believe that the symbol could hold several – or even

all – of the meanings simultaneously, depending on the viewer and the context. With this caution in mind, we will now turn to a comprehensive discussion of the use of the chi-rho in the fourth century.

7.1 The Chi-rho as an Imperial and Militaristic Symbol

As has been repeatedly demonstrated throughout this dissertation, the chi-rho was first and foremost an imperial symbol when it *first* began to be used under Constantine I. The systematic study of both the datable epigraphic and numismatic evidence strongly indicates this, even though the *firmly datable* evidence is itself sparse. The earliest evidence for its use as an imperial symbol is found on the milestone from Beni Fouda dated to 313 CE (see Chapter 6). As we have seen, the chi-rho appears on several *milestones* that date to the reign of Constantine I and often appears with the phrase *bono rei publicae natus.* Taken together, the symbol and the epigraphic formula demonstrate the type of propaganda circulating (at least in North Africa) about the emperor shortly after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. Despite the chi-rho being a monogram composed of the first two letters of Christ's name – and despite the Christian overtones signified in the shift in the emperor's religious beliefs, as detailed in the accounts of Lactantius and Eusebius – the symbol would not have been encountered in a religious context by the average Roman viewer during the reign of Constantine I.

The question, of course, is why the earliest datable visual examples of the symbol that we have from the time of Constantine I occur in North Africa. The answer to this question might be found in the political context surrounding the development of the symbol itself. In 312 CE, after he had defeated Maxentius, Constantine I sent his enemy's head to North Africa.[1] Although the

[1] See *Pan. Lat.* 4.32.6.

reason why Maxentius' head was sent to North Africa is unclear,[2] the fact that it was sent indicates that the North Africans had some sort of stake in the events of 312 CE. It may be for this reason that Constantine's saving sign – signifying his imperial authority – first appears on these milestones. Intriguingly, all of the milestones are found on major roads along military routes (see **Figure 7.1**). This result again indicates the military signification of the chi-rho.

Figure 7.1 Fourth-century milestones along army routes in Roman North Africa.

Another relevant situation occurring in North Africa in the second decade of the fourth century was an ongoing schism within the Church. During the Great Persecution (303 – 311 CE), many North African Christian bishops – and other Christians – had handed over Holy Scriptures to the authorities, thus renouncing Christianity and martyrdom in order to be spared from the death sentence. Once the persecutions had ended, these *traditores* – as they came to be called – returned to the Church. Those who opposed their return – especially without rebaptism – came to be called Donatists, a name taken from Donatus of Casae Nigrae, the bishop of Carthage who

[2] It may have been sent as a warning to Maxentius' former supporters (see Bauer 2010: 3), or it may have been sent to announce North African liberation (see Hollard & Sánchez 2014: 52; and Van Dam 2011: 250). The Panegyric delivered by Nazarius to Constantine (*Pan. Lat.* 4.32.6) states that Maxentius had caused 'affliction' in North Africa. According to Hollard and Sánchez, the North Africans had endured destruction and loss of property under the rule of Maxentius. Frend (1952: 144) talks about the excesses of Maxentius' troops and the popularity of Constantine I as a result.

had succeeded the previous bishop Majorinus in 313 CE.[3] However, Constantine I did not side with the Donatists, supporting instead Caecilianus, who had been named bishop of Carthage in 312 CE.[4] This was the religious milieu in which the milestone from Beni Fouda appears. The Donatists, who appealed to the emperor for years, were officially exiled and had their churches confiscated in 317 CE.[5] Since the emperor never openly supported the Donatists – even though he also never actively worked against them until 317 CE – it is unlikely that the chi-rho on the milestones in North Africa alluded to the Donatist schism. If anything, the chi-rho was a symbol of orthodoxy: first used under an emperor who opposed the Donatists and later (as we have already seen in Chapter 5) used more frequently by emperors who supported Nicene – and opposed Arian – Christianity. But whether as a warning to Maxentius' supporters, a sign of liberation, or a statement of Christian orthodoxy, the chi-rho would have primarily functioned as a reminder of *Constantine I's* victory and his imperial control.

When the chi-rho was first depicted on the imperial coinage, it continued to be closely associated with the emperor. On the silver multiples from Ticinum issued in 315 CE, the symbol appears within the medallion on Constantine I's helmet. The utilization of the chi-rho in this fashion was not merely a stylistic choice. A few decades ago, a helmet with a chi-rho on the crest was found in the Netherlands (in the Meuse valley), confirming that the symbol was indeed used in this way in antiquity (see **Figure 7.2**).[6] Several other potential helmet fittings with a chi-rho have also been found.[7] Indeed, weaponry may have been one of the first types of objects on

[3] Majorinus was the founder of the Donatists, even though the movement did not take his name. For more information on the Donatists, see: Frend (1952); Hoover (2018); and Shaw (2011).
[4] Majorinus was elevated to the position of bishop of Carthage in 312 CE in order to depose Caecilianus. His elevation did not result in the displacement of Caecilianus but in a prolonged schism in the Church. See Frend 1952: 144-149.
[5] Frend (1952), 159. Hoover (2018: 116) notes that the appeals to Constantine I reached their conclusion in 316 CE.
[6] Prins (2000), 309.
[7] See Coulston (2013), 472; Nicolay (2007), 154; and Prins (2000), 319-321.

which the new motif circulated throughout the Empire.[8] From these examples, it is important to note that the symbol was not only associated with the Roman military on coins and milestones: it had a practical use on military equipment, with some soldiers carrying the symbol with them on their armour.

Figure 7.2 A reconstructed Roman helmet with a chi-rho appliqué. It was found in the Meuse Valley (Limburg, Netherlands) as a part of a hoard. Late 4th to early 5th century CE.
"IJZEREN HELM MET CHRISTOGRAM UIT KESSEL (350-400AD)" BY KLEON3, CC BY-SA 4.0. IMAGE IN PUBLIC DOMAIN

[8] Eger (2017), 288.

The chi-rho on military equipment was not the only military context in which the symbol was used. As we have seen, the chi-rho regularly appears on fourth-century coins as a part of the Roman standard, called the *labarum*. According to Lenski, the *labarum* would not only have been viewed as a monogram for the name of Christ but it also would have been associated with Constantine's military expertise.[9] Furthermore, it was before a battle that the *labarum* was purportedly created. The *labarum* – and thus the chi-rho – is directly connected to the Constantinian dynasty and acts as a token of legitimization for their rule.[10] I contend that the spike in the use of the chi-rho on coins during the ascension of each new dynasty in the fourth century, in particular the Valentinians and the Theodosians, is a direct result of this attempt at legitimization through association.

Another indication of the chi-rho's utilization as a symbol of dynastic legitimization is its use on the coins of the usurper Magnentius. Although nearly four decades had passed since the invention of the *labarum* and Constantine I had long since died, the dynastic implications of the chi-rho remained. These allusions to Constantine I are demonstrated when Magnentius issued a type that featured a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega, which was one of the most prominent uses of the symbol on coins in the fourth century. Minting the chi-rho on coins in this fashion created a semiotic association between Magnentius and Constantine I. It was Magnentius' attempt to clearly mark himself as the rightful heir to the emperorship instead of Constantine's biological son, Constantius II. According to Hollard and Sánchez, in this way, the chi-rho was an integral symbol in the repertoire of imperial and elite iconography.[11] It continued

[9] Lenski (2016), 11. He also states that the religious understanding of the symbol would have been dictated by the Christian interpretation given by Lactantius and Eusebius.
[10] Hollard & Sánchez (2014), 70.
[11] Hollard & Sánchez (2014), 127.

to be deployed by members of the imperial circle throughout the fourth century as a link to the past and a legitimatization of the future.

Figure 7.3 *Missorium* of Constantius II found near Kerch, Crimea. A chi-rho appears on the shield of a soldier to the right of the emperor. ca. 337 – 360 CE.
© The State Hermitage Museum (no. 1820-79)

There are a few additional examples of the integration of the chi-rho in palace-commissioned art that further exemplifies the imperial relevance of the symbol. The first is the *missorium* of Constantius II (see **Figure 7.3**). This large silver ceremonial dish, which depicts the emperor on horseback, was found in a necropolis in Kerch (Crimea). On the dish, the emperor is accompanied by Victory, who crowns him with a wreath and holds a palm. A soldier

carries a shield with a chi-rho to the emperor's left.[12] Once again, the symbol appears in a military context and is directly associated with the emperor. This trend continued throughout the fourth century.

Figure 7.4 Mosaic from the Basilica of San Vitale (Ravenna) featuring the emperor Justinian. A large chi-rho appears on the shield of soldier to the emperor's right. Beginning to the middle of the 6th century CE.
"Ravenna Basilica of San Vitale mosaic Justinian" by Ruge, CC BY-SA 4.0. Image in public domain

On the – now destroyed – column of Arcadius, several soldiers were shown carrying shields that featured a chi-rho. The *labarum* was also present on the column, and Victories were depicted engraving shields with the chi-rho.[13] This iconography parallels the motif of Victory,

[12] Bardill (2012), 161; Beckwith (1970), 78-79; and Woods (1997), 196.
[13] Hollard & Sánchez (2014), 118.

inscribing a shield with the symbol that began to appear on the coins around the same time. All of this evidence implies an imperial program of semiotic association between the chi-rho, the military, and the imperial family. Even in the sixth century, under the emperor Justinian, the chi-rho maintains its militaristic signification. The symbol is found on a shield of an imperial bodyguard on a mosaic at San Vitale in Ravenna (see **Figure 7.4**).[14] As I indicated in Chapter 1, the *labarum* may have even been connected to the emperor's personal bodyguards, which the examples from San Vitale and Arcadius' column seem to suggest. Therefore, even though the chi-rho became more and more associated with Christianity – as we shall see below – the link between the symbol and imperial authority never completely ceased in the centuries after Constantine I's death.

The chi-rho was associated with the military and the imperial family throughout the fourth century. Both the coins and the non-funerary inscriptions discussed earlier provide evidence to support this theory. Even when the symbol is found in the middle of the century, it is difficult to divorce it from a dynastic interpretation. Eger, who conducted a study of christograms on dress accessories, found that these symbols did not occur on these types of objects before the second half of the century. Despite evidence of the chi-rho's connection to Christianity by this point (see below), Eger cautions against overly simplistic assumptions about the religious affiliation of the wearer. The same restraint should also be applied to jewelry and other small finds, as the commonplace interaction with such symbols in late antiquity would have desensitized the general Roman viewer to imperial and religious significance.[15] Although it is impossible to say for certain if the wearer was Christian or an imperial ally, what should be taken

[14] Woods (1997), 196.
[15] Eger (2017), 288-315.

away from this study is the flexibility and fluidity of the chi-rho as a symbol throughout the fourth century, a century of ongoing religious negotiation.

One final example, this time from a Roman British context, will highlight the versatility of the meaning of the chi-rho in the fourth century. The Hinton St Mary mosaic is a large, fourth-century, polychrome mosaic which some believe represents one of the first images of Christ on a mosaic (see **Figure 7.5**).[16] This assertion derives from the chi-rho that has been placed behind the figure's head in the centre medallion. If this mosaic does portray Christ, it is the only depiction of the like found in Roman Britain and one of the earliest images of Christ from the western portion of

Figure 7.5 The roundel from the Hinton St Mary mosaic. A chi-rho appears behind the bust of a male figure. 4th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1965,0409.1)

[16] Painter (1967), 18-19; Perring (2002), 136-137; Petts (2003), 115; and Thomas (1981), 105-106 and 182. Although Petts (2003: 115) sees similarities between the Hinton St Mary roundel and fourth-century imperial portraiture, he concludes that the clothing on the bust recommends identification with Christ. Toynbee (1964: 11-13) also toys with the idea that the bust could be of a Christian emperor, but the lack of imperial dress and the fact that there are no known floor mosaics to feature an emperor compel her to conclude that the bust features the earliest representation of Christ on a mosaic in Britain. Nevertheless, it is difficult to use the lack of imperial images on floor mosaics as concrete evidence that this is not an imperial figure since Christ himself does not appear at this time on floor mosaics either. In support of her argument, Toynbee argues that there are several examples of images of Christ in front of a chi-rho, more so than any other type of person, but the examples that she gives from the fourth-century feature the chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega, which may be significant and alter the meaning the chi-rho depending on the context. See Chapter 6 for more information on the use of the alpha and omega with the chi-rho.

the Empire.[17] The figure's identification as Christ is not universally accepted because traditional Roman imagery - such as Bellerophon slaying the chimera, hunting scenes, and busts of the winds/seasons – is present nearby.[18] As we have seen throughout this dissertation, this conflation of elements from different 'religions' – if, indeed, they are – is not problematic, especially during the fourth century, which was a time of such religious change.

Susan Pearce believes that the figure depicted on the mosaic is a member of the imperial family, particularly Constantine I.[19] In her study, Pearce examines the iconography of other objects that merge both Christian and imperial elements. She has found several parallels to the Hinton St Mary mosaic, suggesting that the ancient viewer might have interpreted the bust as a member of the imperial court rather than Christ.[20] Pearce puts forth a compelling argument based

[17] Thomas (1981), 106.

[18] In order to circumvent this problem, both Perring (2003) and Petts (2003) argues that the image of Bellerophon might be connected to Gnosticism, a sect of Christianity and that the image alludes to the victory of the spiritual world over the material world. In particular, Perring argues that the mosaic pavements illustrated Gnostic ritual and the worshipper's quest for a soul (and victory over death). One of the main concerns of Gnostics was how an infinite spiritual being could connect with the finite material world (for more information, see Harrison 1964: 90). The Bellerophon mosaic, therefore, represents this struggle. For Henig (1984: 109), the allegory is more connected with Christ's triumph over evil, rather than the nebulous victory over the material world suggested by Petts. However, Thomas (1981: 106) has rightly pointed out that the removal of the chi-rho from the mosaic also removes the need to reinterpret these traditional 'pagan' images and questions whether images of Bellerophon ever had such Christian connotations. Pearce (2008: 211) suggests that the image of Bellerophon might have been viewed in this context as an association with the emperor, who is often portrayed on coins vanquishing enemies from horseback. This is an intriguing theory, which would help identify the figure in front of the chi-rho with a member of the imperial family rather than Christ. The mosaics could then be viewed together as a visual program meant to promote Constantine and the imperial family, with much less focus on religious signification. Indeed, Huskinson (1974: 75) suggests that imagery of Bellerophon could have an apotropaic function. Thus, perhaps the whole Hinton St Mary mosaic functioned as a sort of protective talisman. See also Ch. 1, fn. 30 and 32.

[19] Pearce (2008), 196 and 214. She also believes that an imperial cult worshipping the emperor Constantine and other members of that imperial family developed in Roman Britain in the fourth century. It is plausible that an imperial cult was founded in this part of the empire, the place where Constantine's father, Constantius Chlorus, died and his son was proclaimed emperor. Painter (1967: 18), however, like Toynbee (see above Ch.7, fn.16), argues that the bust cannot be of an imperial figure because they are not dressed in imperial garments and carry no imperial insignia. Pearce (2008: 205) refutes this by saying that the pallium, the garment that is worn by the figure in the mosaic, had become an important style of imperial dress in the fourth century. See Henig (2001: 31-32) for further arguments on why the image should be viewed as an imperial portrait. Nevertheless, the debate is still ongoing. See, for instance, Lambert (2010: 15-17), who believes that identification with Constantine is unlikely. Pragmatically, Henig (1995: 156) simply states it is easier to view the portrait as Christ rather than an imperial figure, which is a lackadaisical approach to the argument.

[20] Pearce (2004), 84-85.

on the stylistic similarities between the Hinton St Mary bust and other imperial images of Constantine. One such similarity is the emperor's cleft chin, which she determines is an uncommon trait to depict in mosaic portraiture, but which is also found on the colossal statue of Constantine. She concludes that the intent behind the mosaic was to affiliate the emperor, and also the imperial family, with Christ.[21] In this way, she believes that the modern interpretation of the supposed dichotomy that existed between 'pagan' and Christian imagery is deficient[22] and was not actually a phenomenon in the changing world of the fourth century.

As with the Frampton mosaic and Lullingstone fresco (see Chapter 1), it is difficult to determine the precise semiotic meaning behind the chi-rho in the Hinton St Mary mosaic, especially as we are removed – spatially, culturally, and chronologically – from the original context in which it was created. Nevertheless, the fluidity of the layers of meaning between Christian, imperial, and Christo-imperial suited the changing landscape of the fourth century. According to Hurtado, "the frequent use of the chi-rho under (and after) Constantine as an expression of imperial Christianity is a prime example of a pronounced shift in the function of one well-known graphic symbol."[23] Hurtado is discussing the shift in the meaning of the symbol from the time before Constantine I (which we have already explored in Chapter 3) to the fourth century. While he implies that the chi-rho was an expression of imperial Christianity, I believe

[21] Pearce (2008), 213-214. See also Thomas (1981: 104-106), who suggests that mosaics like this one allowed patrons the possibility to cryptically hint at their Christian leanings while at the same time conforming to 'pagan' society. It also permitted a fluid interpretation of the iconography where both Christian and 'pagan' visitors could have viewed the Hinton St Mary mosaic as they would have seen fit, depending on their personal beliefs.
[22] For this argument, see also Cameron's *The Last Pagans of Rome* (2011). In particular, Cameron states that the straightforward divide between 'pagans' and Christians was non-existent in the fourth century. It arose as a particular *Christian* concern and only then towards the end of the fourth century (2011: 173-174).
[23] Hurtado (2017), 40. Although Hurtado talks briefly about the chi-rho under Constantine I, his chapter, titled "Earliest Christian Graphic Symbols: Examples and References from the Second/Third Centuries," focuses on the development of Christian symbols before the fourth century. Mainly, Hurtado examines the tau-rho and its use as a pictorial sign of the crucifixion of Jesus. His article looks at the tau-rho as *nomina sacra* within Christian scribal text and its connection to the cross (see also Chapter 3).

that the symbol held semiotic layers of meaning that could be removed and added in the fourth century. Understanding the layers of meaning would depend on the context and the end-user viewing the symbol. Now that we have explored the chi-rho's imperial implications, the next section will focus on the gradual Christian addition to the various meanings, such as imperial and military, already imbued in the chi-rho.

7.2 THE CHI-RHO AS A CHRISTIAN SYMBOL

Within the first decade of the chi-rho becoming the saving sign of Constantine I, Lactantius, Eusebius, and Optatian had already connected it to the Christian religion as an abbreviation for the name of Christ. But while the ancient Christian authors were quick to connect the symbol with Christ, this was not how the symbol was first employed in art. We have already seen that, first and foremost, the chi-rho was a device for the imperial family. Keppie states that the symbol began as an abbreviation of the word Christ and later became autonomous from that association.[24] However, this study has shown that the situation in the fourth century was much more complicated. The chi-rho began its use under Constantine I as an imperial symbol, and for those outside the emperor's inner circle, those who did not hear stories of his conversion, the symbol was first linked with the Constantinian dynasty and only gradually came to be linked with Christianity. This is not to say that the symbol could not have held both – or, rather, multiple – meanings simultaneously. But while the meanings are not mutually exclusive, those encountering the symbol for the first time in art and inscriptions during the 310s would likely have seen it related to the emperor and not to Christ.

[24] Keppie (1991), 123

As established by the thorough examination of funerary inscriptions found in Chapter 6, the first securely datable use of a chi-rho on a Christian epitaph dates to 323 CE,[25] but it only became a regular device on funerary inscriptions during the 330s. On coins under the control of an imperial authority, a clear correlation between the chi-rho and Christianity occurs even later: first on the coins of Constans and Magnentius when the symbol appears flanked by an alpha and omega, and then not again until the coins of the Theodosian dynasty. Even under the Theodosians, the available evidence does not necessarily signify Christianity to the exclusion of other meanings, as the chi-rho is still found on shields and within wreaths, both of which held a long association with military imagery. In the public sphere, the symbol was intrinsically linked to the military and the imperial family – albeit with implied Christian signification – throughout the fourth century.

There is no doubt that the sign came to be more and more exclusively associated with Christianity, at least in the private sphere, during the fourth century. Chapter 6 discussed evidence demonstrating that the chi-rho could directly replace the word Christ in inscriptions, though using the device in this fashion was quite uncommon. Indeed, as indicated in Chapter 3, despite the popularity of the chi-rho on other types of objects, it is the least attested of the so-called 'Christian' symbols found on papyri. Turning to Egypt, we find there is only one extant example of the use of a chi-rho in a letter.[26] The chi-rho appears in the opening address of a letter, dated to sometime in the fourth century, which was sent from a man named Mebrion to his sister. The correspondence details his son's recovery from a sickness through the aid of God.[27]

[25] Hollard & Sánchez (2014), 62. According to Hollard and Sánchez, this inscription indicates that the symbol has been integrated into a Christian context.
[26] Blumell (2012), 45.
[27] P. Oxy. XXXI 2609. See Blumell 2012: 45-46. Please note that Barrett-Lennard (1994: 34-37) believes that the writer of the letter is a woman, sending it to her Christian 'sister.'

The letter's context is Christian since Mebrion references God directly, thus firmly placing the chi-rho within a religious setting. However, it is critical to reflect on the context before assuming the Christian symbolism of the chi-rho. In this instance, as I shall discuss in more detail below, the chi-rho also functions as a protective device. When examining the chi-rho in art, a non-Christian interpretation of the symbol should never be dismissed, especially as the meaning was not entirely superseded by Christian signification in the fourth century, if it ever was.[28] The context of the find has to be considered before a secure Christian interpretation can be put forward, especially given the non-religious origins of the symbol.

There is evidence from the fourth century that indicates that the chi-rho was employed by some, whether the artists or the patrons, as an exclusively – or, rather, predominantly – Christian symbol. Most of these examples come from the private sphere, including the first category of finds: the late Roman gold glass. These 'vessels' often feature biblical scenes, religious figures, or family groups.[29] They are most often found in a funerary context, set into burial niches, and, therefore, they might have served ritualistic purposes.[30] Therefore, gold-glass roundels can be considered in relation to the funerary inscriptions discussed in Chapter 6. Although secure dating of late antique gold glass is tricky, Howells suggests that they all date to the later part of the fourth century.[31] His speculation on the date of gold-glass roundels aligns with the evidence I have presented on the development of the use of the chi-rho in Christian funerary contexts in the fourth century.

[28] A conclusion also reached by Choat (2006: 118).
[29] These are the prevalent categories of gold-glass figural scenes. Although less common, there are also gold-glass medallions with scenes of Jewish, 'pagan,' and everyday life. For examples, see Howells 2015: 132-145.
[30] Garipzanov (2018), 62.
[31] Howells (2015), 58-60. Howells provides a thorough analysis of the scholarship surrounding the dating gold glass. He concludes that gold-glass roundels were produced (potentially) within a thirty-year period, between 360 and 390 CE. He bases this conclusion on the saints that appear on the gold glass, the cut and incision techniques used, and the date of the catacombs from which they were found.

Gold-glass artifacts that feature the chi-rho are rare, which Garipzanov believes is a reflection of the frequent absence of chi-rhos alongside figural decoration.[32] However, as we have seen, the chi-rho does appear alongside military figural decoration on coins and – although less frequently – with orantes on epitaphs. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that the chi-rho is not often directly integrated with figural imagery but often appears as a free-floating image slightly removed from the rest of the iconography. For example, the majority of those gold glasses with a chi-rho feature two standing males who flank the freestanding symbol. These figural pairings include the Saints Peter and Paul[33] and the Saints Lawrence and Cyprian.[34] Similar in style is the gold glass that is divided into two registers, each with a pair of busts flanking a chi-rho (see **Figure 7.6**). The lower register depicts Saints Peter and Paul, while

Figure 7.6 A gold-glass roundel featuring the Saints Peter, Paul, Lawrence, and Cyprian. A chi-rho appears between each pair. ca. 4th century CE.
Drawn by author (based on Grig 2004: 211)

[32] Garipzanov (2018), 62.
[33] Morey (1959), no. 112. In this example, the chi-rho is within a circle. On another gold glass, two men flank a column surmounted by a chi-rho (see Morey 1959, no. 76). A very similar design, with the two men labelled as Peter and Paul, can be found at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (see Ševčenko 1979a, no. 508). Since there are strong parallels between the two gold glasses, the two unknown men are likely the saints Peter and Paul.
[34] Morey (1959), no. 36. The figures are labelled LAVRENTIVS and CRIPRANVS. According to Vopel (1899: 53), Cripranus stands for Saint Cyprian (Cyprianus). Around the edge of the gold glass is inscribed: *hilaris vivas cvm tvis feliciter semper refrigeris imp pace dei (cheerful, may you live with yours happily, always may you be restored in the peace of God)*.

the upper register features Pastor and Damas.[35] As in these examples, the names of the two men are often labelled, allowing for secure *Christian* identification.

The style of these gold-glass objects is reminiscent of Christian mosaics. When saints appear on mosaics, especially wall mosaics, they are often busts placed in registers (or roundels) and labelled with their names. For instance, the fourth-century mosaics from the Constantinian basilica of Santa Costanza in Rome features figures in roundels – although they are not labelled – and a gold-glass roundel was even found at the tomb of Constantina.[36] However, one significant difference is that the chi-rho and tau-rho rarely – if ever – appear with the saints on wall mosaics.

Figure 7.7 Gold-glass medallion decorated with St Peter and St Paul, who are seated. Between their heads there is a wreath. ca. 4th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1863,0727.8)

[35] Morey (1959), no. 106. Damas likely refers to Pope Damasus. The identity of Pastor is not certain, but Eastman (2011: 105, fn. 88) suggests it is the presbyter Pastor, who is ascribed with building the Basilica of St. Pudentiana.
[36] For more on late antique Christian mosaics, see James' *Mosaics in the Medieval World: from Late Antiquity to the Fifteenth Century* (2017), especially Chapter 4 titled "In the Beginning: Wall Mosaics in the Fourth Century." The style of saints in registers becomes even more prevalent in the fifth century and beyond. See James' *Saints and Spectacle: Byzantine Mosaics in Their Cultural Setting* (2016).

Although the chi-rho is a rare symbol on gold glass, its use can still tell us something about its function. Its placement between two figures strongly parallels a series of gold-glass medallions that feature the Saints Peter and Paul flanking a (sometimes jewelled) wreath (see **Figure 7.7**).[37] We have already seen a connection between the wreath and the chi-rho on both the coins and the inscriptions of the fourth century. As described by Eusebius, the new *labarum* that Constantine had created also placed the chi-rho within a wreath.[38] According to Kellermann, "wreaths were symbols of divine favour and protection" and were closely associated with political life.[39] Those who held a public office could use them as an expression of their *gravitas*. Since it appears that the artist or patron of the gold glass sometimes chose to use a chi-rho in place of a wreath, we can speculate on whether the chi-rho itself held the same connotations of "divine favour and protection," the answer to which will be explored in more detail below.

In the previous examples, the scenes are generic and do not refer to any specific narrative. However, in one case, the two figures stand beside seven bread baskets (see **Figure 7.8**). One of the figures points to the baskets, while the other raises his hand in the motion of speaking.[40] According to Spier, the first figure is Christ, who points a wand towards the breadbaskets while a disciple looks on.[41] Taking into account that other depictions of miracles, such as the raising of Lazareth,[42] Peter striking the rock,[43] Daniel and the dragon of Babylon,[44] and Moses striking the rock,[45] all feature the miracle performer brandishing a wand, I concur

[37] Howells (2015), no. 5. For some more examples, see Morey (1959), nos. 53, 55, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, and 67. See also Ševčenko (1979b: 569, no. 506), which has Peter and Paul flanking a chi-rho in a wreath and Ševčenko (1979a: 570-571, no. 508), which features the apostles flanking a chi-rho, within a wreath, atop a column.
[38] Eusebius *Vit. Const.* 2.30-32.
[39] Kellermann (2001), 24.
[40] Morey (1959), no. 72.
[41] Spier (2007b), 222, no. 49.
[42] For some examples, see Morey (1959), nos. 31, 44, and 77.
[43] Morey (1959), nos. 80 and 81.
[44] Howells (2015), no. 23.
[45] Howells (2015), no. 19.

Figure 7.8 A gold-glass medallion with two figures standing between seven baskets of bread. The figure on the right, holding a wand, is likely Christ. A chi-rho appears in a square between the two figures. ca. 4th century CE.
Drawn by author (based on Simsky (2013))

with Spier's conclusion that this scene is meant to represent the miracle of the loaves. In this scene, a chi-rho appears in a square between the two figures. Although it is prominent – in both size and position – it is not integral to the scene in which it features. As with the other examples of its use in the medium of gold glass, the chi-rho is a freestanding symbol. However, it is not merely a symbol used to fill space; rather, it is deployed as a conscious replacement for other types of iconography, such as a wreath.

The examples given thus far have all seen the chi-rho used directly with biblical scenes and images of saints, securely placing it within a Christian context and setting parameters around how the symbol should be interpreted. There are, however, other examples on gold glass in which the chi-rho's 'Christian' signification is less clear, such as two instances of the symbol on gold-glass medallions with family groups. The first depicts two parents on either side of a girl, with a chi-rho monogram appearing above the head of the girl and between the heads of her parents (see **Figure 7.9**).[46] Above the chi-rho, there is a wreath. The second family group shows two parents flanking a male and a female child.[47] There is a chi-rho above the heads of the two children.

[46] Howells (2015), no. 38.
[47] Howells (2015), no. 39.

Figure 7.9 Gold-glass medallion depicting two parents and their daughter. A chi-rho appears above the head of the girl. ca. 4th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1863,0727.5)

The way in which the chi-rho appears on these two examples is similar to how it is used on the gold-glass medallions with New Testament figures. Indeed, in the first example, the chi-rho is placed directly under a wreath, which is often found in place of the chi-rho on Peter and Paul gold-glass roundels. Furthermore, both of these family groups have invocations, with names of the family members and a wish for them to 'live.'[48] According to Howells, the chi-rho is used to indicate the family's religious affiliation.[49] However, I would caution against this presumption. Based on the wealth and status suggested by the way the figures are dressed and adorned, the family groups might have been members of the imperial court, and thus the chi-rho

[48] See Howells (2015), 128-130. In the second example, only two names are given. According to Howells, the names are likely those of the parents.
[49] Howells (2015), 130.

could have also been used as a symbol of imperial allegiance. A parallel of this type of usage is the Project casket (see Chapter 8). As Ellison states, the chi-rho could also symbolize victory over death.[50] Thus, its use with these family portraits could indicate the family's hope of divine protection over their household, something that the inclusion of the wreath would also suggest. While it is probable that the families were Christian – especially if the roundels date to the latter half of the fourth century – there may have been additional layers of meaning (such as imperial or apotropaic) to the inclusion of the chi-rho on these objects.

A final example of the use of the chi-rho on gold glass – which is relevant to the discussion surrounding the identity of the figure on the Hinton St Mary mosaic (see above) – might also indicate the symbol held layers of meaning. A fragment of a gold-glass roundel from the Metropolitan Museum of Art depicts a bearded male holding a long cross (see **Figure 7.10**).[51] An omega remains on the object's right side, but the alpha that would have adorned the left has been destroyed. Around the edge of the roundel are the words *'…ANE VIVAS IN CR… (…anus, may you live in Chr(ist)?).*' The figure – labelled as St Lawrence (*Laurentio*) – has a chi-rho behind his head, a direct comparison to the chi-rho placed behind the head of the figure on the Hinton St Mary mosaic. Based on certain stylistic features, such as the beard and the thickness of the

Figure 7.10 A gold-glass fragment with St Lawrence. He holds a long cross and has a chi-rho behind his head. ca. 4th century CE.
© Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund,

[50] Ellision (2018: 338).
[51] Morey (1959), no. 460. See also Ševčenko (1979c), 572-573, no. 511.

lettering, this gold glass has been dated to the fifth century.[52] I agree with this date, adding that the use of the long cross also corresponds to a late-fourth or fifth-century date (see, for example, the coins of Honorius and Arcadius in *RIC Volume X*). Although this roundel dates much later, and in a different part of the empire, than the Hinton St Mary mosaic, it is an important object that demonstrates the mutability of the chi-rho as a symbol: it is not solely used in connection with figural representation of Christ or as a stand-in for his name. I believe that the St Lawrence roundel also reveals the apotropaic symbolism of the sign, a layer that can also be given to the semiotic interpretation of the chi-rho on the Hinton St Mary mosaic, whether the figure depicted should be viewed as Christ or a Constantinian emperor.

In summary, although most of the late antique gold-glass examples are considered Christian based on their iconography and the context in which they are found, the signification of the chi-rho on them is less clear. As the examples described above have demonstrated, only a few gold-glass medallions feature the chi-rho. In these instances, the chi-rho is never explicitly used as an abbreviation of the word 'Christ.' Even when labels are given to the figures, such as the apostles or Christ, the chi-rho never replaces Christ's name.[53] Furthermore, the symbol is never directly associated with the figure of Christ. In the example of the miracle of the loaves, although Christ is one of the main figures in the scene, the chi-rho stands an equal distance away from him as from the unknown male figure. It is an adornment to the whole scene, rather than a symbol connected to Christ alone. Finally, it is important to note that not all extant gold-glass roundels include Christian signification. One example is a vessel base that features Hercules

[52] Ševčenko (1979c), 573.
[53] See, for example, Howells (2015), nos. 11, 12 and 13; and Morey (1959), nos. 31 and 50. In all of these examples, Christ is labelled with the Latin CRISTVS.

between a couple who are entreated to live in the name of the hero.[54] This is a significant observation, as it is the same type of sentiment we have already encountered with those family portraits that feature a chi-rho. Like the chi-rho, Hercules is sometimes seen as an apotropaic figure (see also Chapter 8).[55] I note this here, as the apotropaic function of the chi-rho is explored in more detail below.

Figure 7.11 A silver votive plaque from the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire (Painter 1977, no. 18). A gold-gilded chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and an omega, appears in a circle. ca. 4th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1975,1002.18)

Figure 7.12 A silver votive plaque dedicated by Anicilla from the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire (Painter 1977, no. 12). Below the inscription, a chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and an omega, appears in a circle. ca. 4th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1975,1002.12)

We will now turn to another part of the empire, Roman Britain. Although metal objects have been found in other provinces, such as the *missorium* of Constantius II (see above) or the

[54] Howells (2015), no. 35. Around the edge of the roundel are the words *ORFITVS ET CONSTANTIA IN NOMINE HERCVLIS.* Within the field between the couple and Hercules are the words *ACERENTINO FELICES BIBATIS*. Howells states (2015: 123) that the town of Acerentia in Italy had a cult dedicated to Hercules. He also notes, however, that *ACERENTINO* could be a corruption of the word Acheruntius (pertaining to Acheron, i.e. the Underworld).

[55] For more information on the apotropaic function of Hercules, see McCruden (2008: 57-59), who likens Hercules to Christ.

Projecta casket (see Chapter 8), none provides us with the same wealth of examples. Roman Britain supplies us with a rich group of metal objects, often found in hoards, and thus more easily datable to the fourth century. One category of artifacts with chi-rhos that may have Christian signification is a series of votive plaques from Britain found as part of the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire. These silver-gilded plaques are triangular with a leaf-like pattern and feature a chi-rho at the widest wedge of the triangle (see **Figure 7.11**). All but one of the chi-rhos appear within a circle, and all save one are flanked by an alpha and omega.[56] One of the triangular plaques has an inscription, which reads: *Anicilla votum quo(d) promisit conplevit (Anicilla completed this vow, which she had promised)* (see **Figure 7.12**).[57] This inscription confirms that these triangular plaques were used as *vota*. They also, therefore, had some sort of religious function. Based on the thirty coins found with the treasure, the hoard has been dated to the middle of the fourth century.[58] Like the gold glass, then, although these votive plaques cannot be precisely dated, they likely date to sometime in the second half of the fourth century. Also, like the gold glass, the use of such votive plaques was not uniquely Christian. In fact, there was an earlier 'pagan' tradition in Britain of using these types of plaques.[59] The non-Christian plaques characteristically feature a pattern of leaves or feathers, a 'pagan' deity, and a dedication

[56] Painter (1977c), nos. 10; 12-14; 16; 18; 19; 21; and 22. Number 10 is not in a circle, while number 16 is not flanked by an alpha and omega. In two cases, numbers 11 and 12, the omega is upside-down. Although number eleven is not a silver votive plaque itself- it is a gold disk with a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega – it is likely attached to number 10.
[57] Painter (1977c), no. 12. Tomlin (2018: 379) believes that ANICILLA was mistakenly inscribed instead of ANCILLA, the word for a handmaid.
[58] Painter (1977c), 28.
[59] Henig (1984), 145-8. Some examples from Britain include Minerva, Mercury, Mars, Vulcan, and Apollo, among other, Celtic, gods. Twenty gold and silver votive plaques, ten of which were dedicated to a previously unknown goddess named Senuna, were recovered from the temple treasure found at Ashwell (formerly known as the 'Near Baldock hoard) in Hertfordshire (Jackson 2018: 132-140; and Tomlin 2011: 145-146). Although most often found in Britain, these votive plaques are not exclusively British. For example, a series of twenty-four plaques were found in Austria in a shrine of Jupiter Dolichenus (see Painter (1977c: 16-17).

to that deity.[60] Therefore, there are stylistic similarities between the plaques with the 'pagan' deities and those with a chi-rho found at Water Newton, supporting the theory that they held a religious function. Since the majority of the votive plaques found at Water Newton also include an alpha and omega, there is an even stronger Christian implication.

The votive plaques from Water Newton were found with several other objects marked with a chi-rho. According to several scholars, the objects found in this hoard were used as church accoutrements (also called church plate).[61] Unlike the previous artifacts discussed, with votive plaques straddling the line between public and private, the objects considered church ornaments - if that is indeed what they are and were used in church services - fall more within the public sphere. There are four items aside from the votive plaques from the Water Newton hoard inscribed with a chi-rho: a plate, a strainer, and two bowls.[62] The two bowls are of particular interest to this discussion, as they both have inscriptions. The first is a deep bowl (or cup) that has been

Figure 7.13 A silver bowl from the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire (Painter 1977, no. 8). An ornate chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and an omega, appears on the rim of the bowl. ca. 4th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1975,1002.4)

[60] Crerar (2006), 71. According to Crerar, the plaques from Water Newton are plainer in their overall decorative program (2006: 76).
[61] Henig (1995), 111; Hobbs (2016), 84; Lambert (2010), 22; Milburn (1988), 255; and Thomas (1981), 117-119.
[62] All of the items are silver. The large dish (Painter (1977c), no. 3 = *RIB* 2414.4) has a large chi-rho with an open rho etched into it. There is an omega to the right of the chi-rho, but there are no traces of an alpha. The strainer (Painter (1977c), no. 7 = *RIB* 2414.3) has a chi-rho, flanked by an alpha and omega, at the end of the handle. The symbol appears within a circle of punched dots. The two bowls (Painter (1977c), no. 8 = *RIB* 2414.1 and Painter (1977c), no. 9 = *RIB* 2414.2) will be discussed separately in more detail.

heavily damaged (see **Figure 7.13**).[63] Most of the inscription has been lost, but what remains is preceded by an ornate chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega. The inscription that follows reads: *INNOCENTIA ET VIVENTIA … RVNT.* Painter believes that the final word is 'gave,' 'offered,' or 'dedicated.'[64] Since so much of the inscription is missing, it is only within the context of the whole hoard that this 'dedication' can be inferred with any certainty.

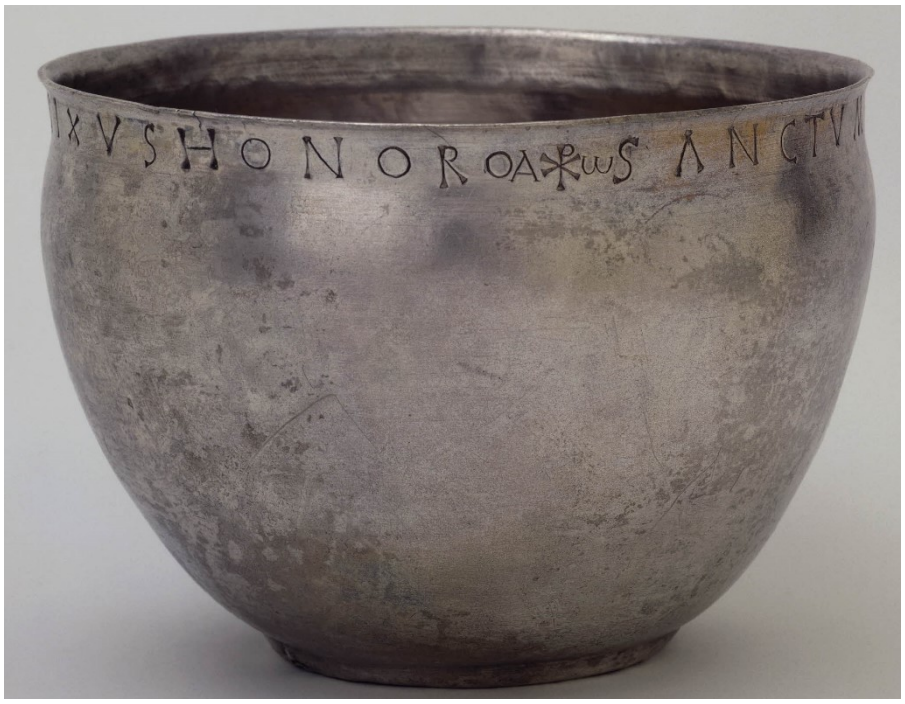

Figure 7.14 A silver bowl from the Water Newton hoard in Cambridgeshire (Painter 1977, no. 9). Two chi-rho, each flanked by an alpha and an omega, appear in the inscription. ca. 4th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1975,1002.5)

Indeed, the second vessel provides additional evidence for the hypothesis that the bowl was a dedication from Innocentia and Viventia. The compelling inscription on the second vessel reads: *SANCTVM ALTARE TVVM DOMINE SVBNIXVS HONORO (O Lord, as a supplicant, I honour your holy altar)* (see **Figure 7.14**).[65] There are two chi-rhos in the inscription, both of

[63] Painter (1977c), no. 8 = *RIB* 2414.1.
[64] Painter (1977c), 13-14. Petts (2016: 664) and Thomas (1981: 116) concur.
[65] Painter (1977c), no. 9 = *RIB* 2414.2.

which are flanked by an alpha and omega. One is found at the end of the inscription; the other is within the word *domine*. The bowl also bears the name Publianus, likely the one who is a supplicant before the altar of God. Scholars are divided on how the word *altare* should be translated. Thomas – writing in the 1980s – believes it should be translated as 'church,'[66] while Doig and Lambert – writing within the last decade –say that it means altar.[67] Based on the modern association of the word church with elaborate structures, I too have chosen to translate the word as 'altar,' siding with the more recent scholarship. But regardless of the specific meaning of *altare,* there is a clear Christian signification to the object, and thus, the symbols found on the object. Since this bowl was found as a part of the same hoard as the Innocentia and Viventia vessel, I suggest that patrons offered these silver objects as dedications to a church and the chi-rho was an apotropaic adornment meant to protect both the objects and the place of worship (see below).

Figure 7.15 A silver spoon (*cochlear*) from the Hoxne hoard in Suffolk (Johns 2010, no. 135). A griffin appears where the handle joins the bowl of the spoon. A chi-rho has been etched in the bowl. ca. beginning of 5th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1994,0408.135)

Water Newton is not the only hoard found in Britain to have metal objects inscribed with chi-rhos, but it is important because it is dated, by external corroborating evidence, as one of the earliest metal hoards to use the symbol.[68] Although it is very unlikely that every metal object

[66] Thomas (1981), 116 and 149.
[67] Doig (2008), 50; and Lambert (2010), 22. Tomlin (2018: 380) chooses to translate *altare* as 'sanctuary.'
[68] While none of the hoards are precisely datable, some can be more generally dated because of coins found with the objects. Both the Hoxne treasure and the treasure from Traprain Law have a *terminus post quem* of the beginning of the fifth century.

with the symbol found in Britain was used for the purpose of church accoutrements, the possibility remains a prevalent hypothesis amongst scholars, especially when considering the groups of objects on which the symbol is found.[69] Some of the most common types of metal objects found with the chi-rho are spoons,[70] bowls,[71] and dishes.[72] The decoration on the spoons from the Hoxne hoard is particularly ornate: two have handles that are decorated with the heads of birds, while a third features a griffin (see **Figure 7.15**).[73] The addition of an animal head at the point where the bowl joins with the handle became a standard characteristic on the spoons of the fourth and fifth centuries.[74] Since spoons without chi-rhos from the Hoxne hoard can also feature zoomorphic motifs,[75] they were not specifically linked to the symbol. It is difficult, then, to determine the signification of these zoomorphic motifs in the possible liturgical context at Hoxne.

As we have seen, several of the vessels in the Water Newton hoard featured additional text, which helped to situate the chi-rho within a Christian context. Two vessels from elsewhere in Britain provide further evidence for this religious association. A (now lost) silver *lanx*

[69] For example, the objects found at Traprain Law might also be silver plate (see Watts 1991: 156).
[70] Silver spoons with chi-rhos are found at Hoxne (see Johns: 2010, nos. 89, 90, 118, 119, and 135), Mildenhall (see *RIB* 2420.53-55; and Painter 1977b), Biddulph (see *RIB* 2420.56), Monmouthshire (see *RIB* 2420.57), and Traprain Law (see *RIB* 2420.58 and 2420.59). With the exception of three spoons (Johns: 2010, no. 135; *RIB* 2420.58; and *RIB* 2420.59), the chi-rhos are all flanked by alphas and omegas.
[71] Bowls engraved with chi-rhos have been found in Corbridge (*RIB* 2414.39), Wall in Staffordshire (*RIB* 2415.64), Sutton (?) in Cambridgeshire (*RIB* 2417.29), Caerwent (*RIB* 2417.37), and London (*RIB* 2417.40). Bowls with chi-rhos were forged in silver (*RIB* 2414.39), bronze (*RIB* 2415.64), and pewter (*RIB* 2417.29, 2417.37, and 2417.40). Only two of the bowls feature a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega (*RIB* 2417.29 and 2417.40).
[72] Dishes with chi-rhos have been found at Risley Park (*RIB* 2414.40), Appleshaw (*RIB* 2417.36), and Welney (*RIB* 2417.39). One of the dishes is silver (*RIB* 2414.40), while two are pewter (*RIB* 2417.36 and 2417.39). Only one of the dishes, *RIB* 2417.39, features a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega.
[73] See Johns (2010: nos. 118 and 119) for the spoons decorated with birds and Johns (2010: no. 135) for the one with the griffin.
[74] Strong (1966), 204-206.
[75] For example, see Johns 2010: nos. 136 and 137. While number 79 does not have a zoomorphic motif at the junction between the bowl and handle of the spoon, the bowl is engraved with a sea-griffin. The griffin was an apotropaic motif from the ancient period through to late antiquity (see Gonosová & Kondoleon 1994: 251). According to Gonosová and Kondoleon, the addition of the chi-rho bolsters the apotropaic function of the griffin.

(shallow dish) from Risley Park features a scene with a boar hunt.[76] On the underside of the dish, there is the following inscription: *EXSVPERIVS EPISCOPVS ECCLESIAE BAIOCENSI DEDIT* (*Bishop Exsuperius gave (this) to the Church of 'Baiocensus'*).[77] This engraving, revealing that the dish was bequeathed to a church by a Christian authority, firmly sets the chi-rho within a Christian context. The second vessel, a pewter bowl from Sutton in Cambridgeshire, has a variety of motifs: including a chi-rho flanked by an alpha and omega; a peacock and two peahens; an owl; and four Nereids.[78] The inscription below the rim's flange is uncertain; it is either *super(a)ti sic patientia (conquered thus with patience)* or *supe(lle)ctili epi(scopi) clerique (this belongs to the paraphernalia of the bishop and clergy).*[79] If the second reading is correct, it is additional evidence directly correlating the chi-rho with church ornaments in Britain. Both the dish from Risley Park and the bowl from Sutton are further intriguing evidence for 'pagan' motifs used alongside the chi-rho. A possible resolution (if one is needed) for the combination of 'Christian' and 'pagan' symbols in art – especially in the fourth century, which (as I have already mentioned) was a period of religious negotiation – will be explored in more detail in the following section.

[76] *RIB* 2414.40. Similar in theme is the Great Hunting Plate from the Sevso treasure (likely originally from a Hungarian provenance), which features a miniscule chi-rho within a wreath at the top of the hunting scene. For more on this plate, see Leader-Newby (2018: 250-251).
[77] I have chosen not to translate the name of the Church, as there is no consensus among sources. According to Strong (1966: 186), the exact church is unknown. When Dr. William Stukeley described the lanx in a letter in 1735, he stated that Bishop Exsuperius, who gave the lanx, originated from France (see Fenwick (1851), 26). However, the *RIB* translates *Baiocensi* as Bayeux (see 2414.40), and Henig (1995: 167) uses Bogium (which he hypothesizes could have been an estate at Risley).
[78] *RIB* 2417.29.
[79] See Petts (2003), 39.

Figure 7.16 A lead (baptismal?) tank from Walesby, Licolnshire. In the top panel, a female worshipper appears to be preparing for her baptism. A large chi-rho is found beneath the panel. ca. 4th century.
Picture reproduced with permission from The Collection: Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire

The final group of metal objects relevant to this discussion is a series of large cylindrical lead tanks found in various places throughout Britain.[80] Although they are not securely dated,[81] those with 'Christian' symbols are unique to Britain[82] and therefore have the capacity to shed light on a practice particular to the region in that region. The function of these lead tanks is uncertain, although several scholars have proposed that they were used as baptismal fonts.[83] The art found on these lead tanks might also suggest this; for example, the lead tank from Walesby

[80] *RIB* 2416.9-14. The lead tanks were found in Icklingham, Wiggonholt, Ashton, and Walesby. Only one of the chi-rhos on the tanks, *RIB* 2416.9 is flanked by an alpha and omega.
[81] Thomas (1981), 226. They must, nevertheless, date to before the Romans withdrew from Britain at the end of the first decade of the fifth century.
[82] Petts (2016), 671. Petts also mentions a lead tank from Flawborough that has four *orantes*. It is noteworthy that Britain, where there is little evidence for Christian tomb markers (see Tomlin 2018: 376), is where many metal objects with chi-rhos, such as lead tanks and church accoutrements, have been found.
[83] See Lambert (2010), 26-27; Thomas (1981), 226-227; and Toynbee (1962), 181-182, no. 133. Thomas does admit, however, that baptism is the most plausible solution until more evidence is found. Lambert further emphasizes the Christian significance of these leads tanks by corresponding their find spots to areas where Christianity flourished. In his argument, he also states that they have symbols of "universally accepted Christian provenance, such as the chi-rho." As we have seen throughout this dissertation, this statement is highly problematic.

depicts a female worshipper who appears to be in preparation before her baptism (see **Figure 7.16**).[84] More recently, however, it has been argued that the tanks were employed for ritual ablutions, such as foot washing, that occurred before the actual baptism since they were too small for immersion, the type of baptism practiced at the time.[85] Both of these theories assume the lead tanks were used for Christian rituals, and both place their function firmly within a baptismal context. However, we have no clear idea of their function, and, as we have seen, the chi-rho is far from an unequivocal Christian symbol. Crerar argues convincingly that too much about the lead tanks is unknown to provide any conclusions about their function.[86] Using the lead tanks as evidence for the Christian symbolism of the chi-rho is circular reasoning; for one is presuming that the lead tanks are Christian because of the use of the chi-rho and that the chi-rho is Christian because of their appearance on the lead tanks. Therefore, of all the evidence presented in this section, the inclusion of the lead tanks as support for a Christian interpretation of the symbol is the most tenuous.

This section has explored some evidence for the use of the chi-rho in (mostly) secure Christian contexts. All of the examples provided are from outside the realm of imperial authority. For the most part, they are also from the private sphere, although religious officials might have used some of these objects, like the supposed church accoutrements and lead tanks, in public ceremonies. The objects with writing provide the most substantial evidence for the Christian signification of the chi-rho and its use as a symbol by devotees of the religion. While it is easy to

[84] *RIB* 2416.14. See also Petts (2016), 671.
[85] See West & Plouviez (1976), 78. West and Plouviez believe that this is the most likely function of the lead tanks. See also Petts (2016: 671), who states that their exact function is still uncertain.
[86] Crerar (2012), 155-156. Crerar's whole article presents evidence to refute the automatic Christianization of the lead tanks. Even if the chi-rho did signify Christianity to the late Roman viewer, its use on the lead tanks is not necessarily linked to their function. Furthermore, she suggests that the scene on the Walesby tank has more in common with Romano-Celtic fertility goddess iconography than with Christian baptism (2012: 146-149). It is unclear, then, what the iconography on the Walesby tank is signifying.

transfer signification between groups of similar objects, or even those found together like those of the Water Newton hoard, it is important to restrain from these reflexive associations. It is impossible to say over how long a span of time a treasure like Water Newton was collected, if all pieces served within the same context, or even if they all belonged to the same person.

We have seen that the chi-rho is present on a significant number of funerary inscriptions and that this might allude to its function as a Christian symbol from the middle of the fourth century onwards. But even in more explicit Christian examples, like the gold-glass roundels, the exact signification of the chi-rho is far from certain. In the next section, I will turn to the one consistent meaning that the chi-rho held during the fourth century and beyond.

7.3 THE CHI-RHO AS AN APOTROPAIC SYMBOL

The apotropaic function of the chi-rho has been suggested throughout this dissertation and will now be explored in depth. Several scholars – including Grabar (1968), Drake (1976), Llewelyn (1998) and, more recently, Lewis (2016) and Garipzanov (2018) – have hypothesized about the apotropaic, or talismanic, nature of the chi-rho.[87] However, while scholars have briefly mentioned the apotropaic function of the chi-rho in passing or while discussing a particular object, to the best of my knowledge, none of them has attempted to examine the topic in any meaningful way. Therefore, the subsequent discussion will tie together various threads of evidence as I attempt to demonstrate what I consider the most significant semiotic layer of meaning of the chi-rho and the key to determining its interpretation in fourth-century art.

[87] Drake (1976), 73; Garipzanov (2018), 20 and 47-49; Grabar (1968), 39; Lewis (2016), 267; Llewelyn (1998), 166; and Nuzzo (2001), 254.

In Chapter 3, I explained that some of the first examples of the pre-Constantinian implementation of the chi-rho are found in the margins of papyri dated between the first century BCE and the second century CE. The word χρηστόν (good) was abbreviated as a chi-rho to highlight important passages. I believe that there is a connection between this early use of the symbol and its later (re)adoption in the fourth century. According to Blumell, the word "Christian" (χριστιανός) became a moniker for the followers of Jesus towards the end of the first century, having very likely derived from the Greek word for "Christ" (χριστός).[88] However, as Blumell rightly emphasizes, those who were unfamiliar with the Greek word "Christian" seem to have mistaken it with the adjective for good, sometimes even incorrectly replacing the iota in 'χριστιανός' with an eta, creating the word 'χρηστιανός.'[89] If there was a direct – albeit mistaken – association between the noun for 'Christian' and the adjective for 'good' in Greek, there may have also been a semiotic connection between the fourth-century chi-rho and the concept of 'good,' especially since one of the earliest extant uses of the symbol was as an abbreviation for 'χρηστὸς' on papyrus. It would not be too much of a stretch to hypothesize that this association translated into the symbol imbuing protective qualities.

As we have seen in Chapter 4, there is literary evidence to support and confirm the perceived protective properties of the chi-rho when it was first adopted in the fourth century under Constantine I. In his description of Constantine's vision, Eusebius states that the symbol functioned as a form of protection (*ἀμυντήριον*) for the emperor during his encounters with his enemies.[90] The imperial coins discussed in Chapter 5 help illustrate the chi-rho's connection with

[88] Blumell (2012), 37. Those outside of the early Jesus movement initially used the word before Christians themselves eventually adopted it sometime during the second century.
[89] Blumell (2012), 37. Both Suetonius (*Claud. 25.4*) and Tertullian (*Ad Nat.* 1.3.8-9) confirm this mistaken association between the words.
[90] Eusebius, *Vit. Const.* 1.31.

the military. In addition, in a letter the emperor wrote to eastern provincials in 324 CE – as recorded by Eusebius – Constantine himself declares that the chi-rho was '*a seal put before him everywhere for his protection'* (*τὴν σὴν σφραγῖδα πανταχοῦ προβαλλόμενος καλλινίκου ἡγησάμην στρατοῦ*).[91] If Constantine considered the *labarum* a military talisman,[92] it was the chi-rho itself - as the core of the *labarum's* composition - that served the apotropaic function. According to Lenski, by turning the chi-rho into a symbol of victory, Constantine united his subjects under a mutually beneficial sign.[93] Those who were Christian could appreciate the symbol as an allusion to Christ, while those who were not could still value the apotropaic nature of the sign.

The talismanic elements associated with the chi-rho, which have already been touched upon briefly in Chapter 3, can be seen most clearly in two examples of magical papyri. In the first example, a chi-rho has been found on a fourth-century love spell from Egypt.[94] It is also found on a papyrus with a curse against a fugitive slave, Theodoros.[95] The function of both of these papyri is magical, and the chi-rho is an additional protective component of the supernatural properties of the text. It is perhaps in this light that one should consider the use of the chi-rho in the correspondence from Mebrion to his sister that was discussed above. It is possible that Mebrion, in his letter detailing the recovery of his son from an illness, included the chi-rho not only as a Christian symbol but also as a protective device meant to ward off further evil.

[91] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 2.55.1-2. See also Lenski (2016), 70.
[92] Lenski (2016), 53.
[93] Lenski (2016), 53.
[94] Maguire (2017), 225. Unfortunately, while the original publication of the papyrus (Preisendanz 1913: 554) dates the papyrus to the fourth century, it does not give the reason why and nor does Maguire. According to de Bruyn (2017: 62), one often finds signs, such as chi-rhos, crosses, and tau-rhos, on Christian amulets and incantations.
[95] Llewelyn (1998), 166. The papyrus also has χμγ at the top of it. The exact meaning of this abbreviation is unclear, but it might stand for *χ(ριστὸν) μ(αρία) γ(εννᾷ) (Mary gave birth to Christ*). For a more in-depth analysis of the abbreviation, see Blumell (2012) 47-48; and de Bruyn (2017), 65-66. While the curse was likely made sometime between the fifth and sixth centuries, I have included it in my analysis because of its similarities with the dog tag mentioned in Chapter 6.

The use of the chi-rho in art also demonstrates the symbol's apotropaic characteristics. In this respect, there are three lines of inquiry to explore that will further my hypothesis of the use of chi-rho as a talisman: its application on slave collars; its appearance on a lead casket from East Stoke; and its use on tombs. Firstly, the chi-rho is found on a number of slave collars, most of which – it has been suggested – date to the fourth century because of the chi-rho, which is a circular argument.[96] These slave collars were probably a Christian development: a way of eliminating tattooing or other types of branding on slaves.[97] The slave collars are similar to the dog tag belonging to the sheepdog of the shepherd Filicissimus detailed in Chapter 6. At first glance, it seems that the chi-rho in these examples could be functioning as an indication of the Christianity of the owner. It might also have been an indication that the slave was the property of the Church, as the Roman Church itself owned slaves on monastery lands.[98] And indeed, there is an inherent assumption by scholars that the chi-rho is functioning solely as a Christian symbol on these collars.[99] There is no need, however, for this restrictive conclusion. Since these collars were made to mark slaves as property in case they decided to flee, the chi-rho could have functioned not only as a symbol of the religious leanings of the owner but also as a protective ward for their property and against the possibility of escape. Thus the chi-rho was an apotropaic talisman placed on the slaves' collars to protect the owner's property.

The second piece of evidence for the apotropaic function of the chi-rho is a panel from a lead casket found in East Stoke, Britain. The panel is decorated with two roughly shaped figures wearing skirts flanking a chi-rho within a medallion. Above the chi-rho is an inscription that

[96] Cooley (2012), 249; and Harper (2011), 258. It is important to note that they are dated based on the presence of the chi-rho, which is not a reliable means of dating.
[97] Glancy (2002), 88. There is even evidence of slaves belonging to church members, such as the collar of the slave who belonged to the archdeacon Felix (see Harper 2011: 258).
[98] Gerbner (2018), 15.
[99] For example, see Cooley (2012), 249; Glancy (2002), 88; and Harper (2011), 258.

reads: VTERE FELIX (*good luck to the user*).[100] Painter describes the two robed figures as angels, although he further mentions that they are evocative of flanking Victories.[101] Even though the figures are flanking a chi-rho, there is nothing to indicate that the visual language of the panel would suggest the figures are angels, especially as angels were depicted in late antiquity – certainly in the fourth century, in any case – as males.[102] Furthermore, there are iconographic similarities between this panel and a series of coins issued in the middle of the fourth century that depict two Victories flanking a wreath surmounted by a chi-rho (see Chapter 5 and Appendix A). Whether or not the figures are representations of Victory, this example provides a direct verbal association between the chi-rho and the notion of (Christian) luck (*utere felix*). Again, the chi-rho could be apotropaic, a talisman placed on the casket and a symbol, like the inscription, bringing luck to the user.

Finally, there is evidential support for the apotropaic use of the chi-rho on tombs. All of the securely datable funerary inscriptions from the fourth century were examined in detail in Chapter 6. During my analysis, I demonstrated that the chi-rho rarely appears on funerary inscriptions before the middle of the fourth century, and therefore, it is safe to assume that the majority of the following examples were made sometime thereafter.

Although not directly connected to the chi-rho itself, there is epigraphic evidence that Christians, like 'pagans' before them, were concerned with the inviolability of their tombs.[103] Not only can epitaphs offer guidance or hope to the deceased and their family, but they can also

[100] *RIB* 2416.8. The expression *utere felix* is particularly prevalent in Roman Britain (see Raybould 1999: 140).
[101] Painter (1977c), 68.
[102] Guiley (2004), 181.
[103] Keppie (1991), 122-123.

impart threats and warnings to those who might rob or vandalize the tomb.[104] One Christian example, from the catacomb of Saint Agnes in Rome, states:

> *male pereat insepultus iaceat non resurgat cum Iuda partem habeat si quis sepulcrum hunc violaverit*
>
> If anyone should violate this tomb, may he die badly, may he lie unburied not to be resurrected, may he have a portion with Judas (i.e. share the fate of Judas)
>
> *ICUR* 21396

The curse explicitly states what could happen to anyone who violates the deceased's tomb and wishes upon the grave disturber the same fate as Judas, the preeminent betrayer of Christ.

On the other end of the spectrum, there are also blessings that were used to protect the deceased and their grave. There are two formulae in particular that we have already come across in Chapter 6. The first is *dis manibus sacrum* (D M S), an expression borrowed from 'pagan' tombs. As we have already explored, the presence of the D M S formula on supposedly Christian funerary inscriptions was quite common, and the 'pagan' formula can even be found alongside the chi-rho on graves from Christian catacombs. There are two underlying assumptions being made in the previous sentence: that the DMS formula is exclusively 'pagan' and that the chi-rho is exclusively Christian. Both of these assumptions are problematic, and throughout this dissertation, there have been many examples of so-called 'pagan' and 'Christian' expressions and motifs coexisting. In addition, Borg even cautions against the notion that all of the funerary inscriptions from catacombs belong to worshippers of Christianity.[105] Whether on 'pagan' or Christian epitaphs, the D M S formula may have continued to function as a means of protecting the tomb,[106] such as on the tomb of Victorinus, which reads:

---

[104] Evans (2015), 202.
[105] Borg (2013), 265-267.
[106] Cooley (2012), 232. According to Cooley, there is a difference in the use of the formula among Christians. The deceased person's name is usually not used with the genitive, thus removing the close relationship between the deceased and the *manes*.

d(is) m(anibus) | Secundianus fratri suo Victorino in ☧ | benemerenti qui uixit annis (sic) XXXIII et menses VIIII deposi<t>us XIIII kal(endas) octob(res) in pace

For the manes, Secundianus (made this) for his brother Victorinus well-deserving in Christ, who lived for thirty-three years and nine months, was deposited on the 14th calends of October in peace

ICUR 19511 = *ILCV* 3377E

It is important to note that while the D M S formula may have been a largely conventional turn of phrase that was placed on graves (thus having lost any *real* meaning), it not only continued to be used in the transitional period of the fourth century (see section 6.1 above) but well into the period when Christianity was the official religion of the Roman Empire. This might suggest a continued superstitious belief in the formula and account for its placement on graves. So that even if a Christian patron did not have D M S engraved on their tomb based on an actual belief in the *manes*, its inclusion demonstrates protocol that was followed for the safety of the deceased. In this way, the chi-rho also might have been an added layer of protection – an additional talisman – to safeguard the grave. So although the Victorinus in the above example was undoubtedly Christian, neither the D M S formula nor the chi-rho was exclusively religious statements of belief; they were also apotropaic devices.

The epitaph of Victorinus also provides an example of the use of *in pace*, the second formula commonly found in Christian inscriptions. As revealed during my analysis in Chapter 6, the phrase '*in pace'* is found more commonly with the chi-rho than the tau-rho. However, this does not necessarily imply that the combination of the chi-rho with the *in pace* formula automatically transfers Christian symbolism to both. There is no reason to assume that the expression was proprietary to Christians or even that they were the ones who created it.[107] The phrase *in pace* invokes the idea of the deceased person resting in tranquillity in the afterlife.

[107] Borg (2013), 267-268. According to Borg, the formula can be found on several Jewish inscriptions as well.

Whether or not there was Christian intent behind its inclusion on the gravestone, the chi-rho adds to the sentiment of protection.

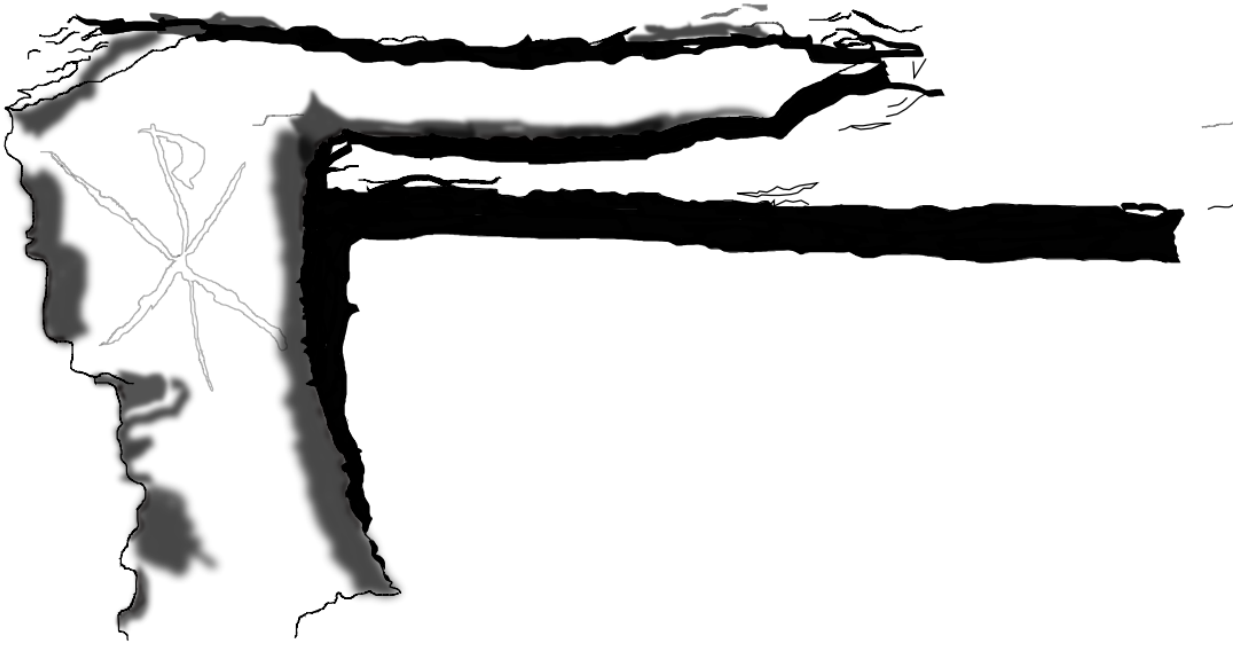

Figure 7.17 Plaster surrounding a burial niche at the catacombs of Domitilla, Rome (*ICUR* 8092a). A chi-rho has been etched into the plaster on the left side of the niche. ca. 4th century CE.
Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 24818)

In addition to the inclusion of the chi-rho with the formulae previously discussed, there are two other lines of evidence to pursue that further support the hypothesis that the chi-rho had an apotropaic function, regardless of its use as a dynastic or Christian symbol. The first is a series of inscribed chi-rhos found on plaster – also limestone or mortar – from funerary contexts (see **Figure 7.17**).[108] The symbols were etched into the fresh plaster when the tomb's burial-

[108] For some examples, see *ICUR* 7286a-f; 7287a-z; 7288a-z; 7289a-u; 7291a-h; 7292a+b; 7374b; 8092a-m; 8093a-m; 8094a-f; 8095e; 8643b; 8713a; 10747a-v; 10748a-e; 10750a-e; 10752a-c; 10754b; 10755b+c; 10846-a-d; 11060a-h; 11061a+c-e; 11062g-I; 12218a-h; 12219a-h; 12220a+b; 12224c; 12409d+e; 12410b; 12415d+g; 13268; 15175a-z; 15176a-s; 15182e+g; 15183b; 15349a; 15489a-z; 15490b+c; 15887b; 16930a-f; 16936c+d; 17280a-e; 17281b+c; 17374a-f; 17375a-f; 17376b; 19879a-z; 19880a-I; 19881c+e+g; 19886a-d; 19887b; 19889c-e; 19891b-e; 19893b; 19894c+d; 19902b; 20321a-i+l; 20323a-h; 20324b+c; 20591a-c; 20592; 20593c; 20692a+b; 21565a-x; 21566a-s; 21567c-g; 21569a-c; 21570a-p; 21571c-f; 21572b+c; 21589a; 22912a-n; 22913a-i; and 22916e.

niche (*loculus*) was sealed.[109] Since the chi-rhos were added to the plaster at the moment of sealing the tomb, their significance cannot be overstated. Consequently, while the act of inscribing the symbol might have been a statement of religion, it was no less an apotropaic act meant to protect the grave.[110] In some instances, especially in the catacombs, these talismanic symbols were forms of invisible art, not necessarily meant to be seen – and, therefore, not statements of religion to the *sign-viewer* – but protection for the deceased, the intended *sign-user*. Furthermore, it was not always necessary to etch the chi-rho directly unto the plaster. Since coins (with the reverse side facing outwards)[111] and gold-glass roundels[112] could feature chi-rhos – and since both these categories of objects could be set into the mortar as protective devices as well – they provide further evidence for the talismanic properties of the chi-rho in burial-niche contexts.

The second argument that lends credence to the chi-rho's function as an apotropaic symbol is the parallels between it and the use of images of gorgons on graves. As we have seen in Chapter 6, the chi-rho can often be found as a freestanding symbol above the rest of the funerary inscription on tombstones. Sometimes, two doves flank the symbol. One example that uses this style of iconography is the tombstone of Marcus and Karisia, which dates to 356 CE (see **Figure 7.18**).[113] A similar design layout can also be found on an epitaph from Ravenna,

[109] Cooley (2012), 232. These inscriptions are called '*a nastro*'.
[110] Cooley (2012), 232. This theory is further supported by some instances where chi-rhos were repeatedly etched into the plaster as though to increase the protective qualities.
[111] Borg (2013), 262. Borg believes that the protective quality came from the emperor facing inwards towards the deceased. However, a coin of Magnentius found in a grave at Poundbury that was pierced so that it could be suspended with the chi-rho upright (Esmonde Cleary 1989:107) indicates that the imagery on the reverse of coins could also function as apotropaic images. Seals, gems, lamps, and small flasks could also be set into the mortar of the grave. See also Toynbee (1971), 237.
[112] Borg (2013), 263. Saints, 'pagan' deities, and various Jewish symbols are also found on gold glasses. These motifs could be set into the mortar of tombs found in the catacombs, which might indicate that their function was also more apotropaic than religious.
[113] *ICUR* 6499.

which commemorates the death of two foster children, Lupus and Aper.[114] In this case, however, above the inscription is a gorgon flanked by two dolphins. As well as often being paired with flanking dolphins,[115] gorgons can also be found on funerary inscriptions surrounded by wreaths.[116] As we have seen, there are many examples of the chi-rho surrounded by a wreath (see Ch. 6, fn. 87 and Appendix C). There are visual similarities between the deployment of the chi-rho and the use of gorgons in funerary contexts, and since both dolphins[117] and gorgons[118] were used as apotropaic iconography, I believe the parallels in the visual language may have been created because of the similar semiotic (apotropaic) meaning between the chi-rho and these devices. Both Christians and non-Christians drew from a similar repertoire of iconography and shared a

Figure 7.18 The tombstone of Marcus and Karisia (*ICUR* 6499). A chi-rho appears between two doves. 356 CE. Drawn by author (based on EDB online: 19876)

[114] *CIL XI* 188. See Williams (2012: 341-342), who provides a translation of the epitaph. Williams (2012: 340) discussed a second epitaph that features gorgons and dolphins with rams' heads, garlands, and griffins.
[115] For some examples, see: *AE* 1914, 101; *AE* 1929, 203; *AE* 1929, 212; *AE* 1902, 24 = *CIL III* 14511; and *CIL III* 5680.
[116] For a couple of examples, see: *AE* 1914, 101; and *AE* 1989, 650.
[117] For example, see Magness (2010: 148), who states that the dolphins found amongst astrological symbols on ceiling tiles at the Dura Europos synagogue may have had apotropaic symbolism. See also Weiss 2018: 86, fn. 85.
[118] See Jijina (2007), no. 99; and Potthoff (2017), 107.

common aspiration for a good existence after death.[119] Both the gorgon and the chi-rho shared the same type of function. Whether the chi-rho was a chosen replacement by a (Christian) patron for the type of protection offered by the image of a gorgon, or it began to imbue apotropaic properties the more it was used in this function, the result remains the same: the chi-rho was a protective symbol in addition to any other meanings – dynastic and/or Christian – it might have held.

It is within this light that we should view the function of the chi-rho on other kinds of objects as well. Eger believes that a chi-rho engraved on a fibula after it was made could have functioned as an amulet.[120] So too, then, might the number of lamps that were produced with no other decoration than a chi-rho. Moreover, it might even account for the gemstones engraved with the symbol that have been dated to the third century.[121] One example, on a brown jasper gem, features images on two sides. The first side has two good shepherds, a chi-rho, and several magical symbols, while the other side features Hekate, Anubis, and a third, unknown figure, along with the writing VENVS VICTRI(...).[122] This gem is the perfect example of a coexisting mixture of Christian and 'pagan' iconography, all of which have apotropaic signification.

In summary, there is no doubt that the chi-rho had an apotropaic significance and could function as a talisman.[123] According to Maguire,

> In discussing graphic signs, it is important to consider not only their cognitive aspects (for example, the role of memory or the visualization of abstract concepts such as Christian dogma), but also their power; that is, they should be considered not only as

[119] Borg (2013), 243.
[120] Eger (2017), 316. Another possibility, according to Eger, is that the user chose to proclaim their religion by engraving the symbol on their *fibula*.
[121] de Bruyn (2017: 62) believes the gemstones were produced in Syria or Asia Minor a generation or two before Constantine. For some examples of third-century gemstones with the chi-rho, see Spier (2007a), nos. 112-132. I question Spier's dating, however, as even stones that have the image of a chi-rho and a cross have been given a vague third-fourth century date. There is no conclusive evidence that the cross even became a motif in combination with the chi-rho before the late fourth century.
[122] Spier (2007a), 82, no. 465.
[123] A conclusion I share with Llewelyn (1998: 166).

> motifs to be read and used in thinking, but also as devices to be used in the active negotiation of day-to-day living.
>
> Maguire (2017), 225

The chi-rho certainly fits within this framework. The symbol's origins, its description by ancient authors, its use by emperors and Christians, and its similarities with other apotropaic symbols all contribute to the conclusion that the symbol was above all a protective device regardless of the other layers of meaning it may have held simultaneously.

7.4 Concluding Observations

In conclusion, the development of the chi-rho as a symbol in the fourth century is extremely complex. Nevertheless, examining the chi-rho on various types of objects used throughout the fourth century has proved extremely valuable. **Figure 7.19** is a graphic timeline that breaks down the various types of signification that the chi-rho could hold, as explored throughout this chapter. When it first began to be used by the emperor Constantine, it was deployed mainly as a dynastic symbol. It appears on coins and other objects as a military talisman – an expression of the emperor's authority – but also a testament to his protection by the Christian God. It is important not to underestimate the importance of the supernatural potency of the symbol during the age of Constantine I.[124] It was under the emperor that the symbol became imbued with the idea of militaristic victory. I opened this chapter with a quote from George Orwell's *1984* that neatly encapsulates Constantine's use of the chi-rho. By adopting the symbol for his own needs, he took control of the symbol's past meanings and apotropaic qualities.

[124] Llewelyn (1998), 166.

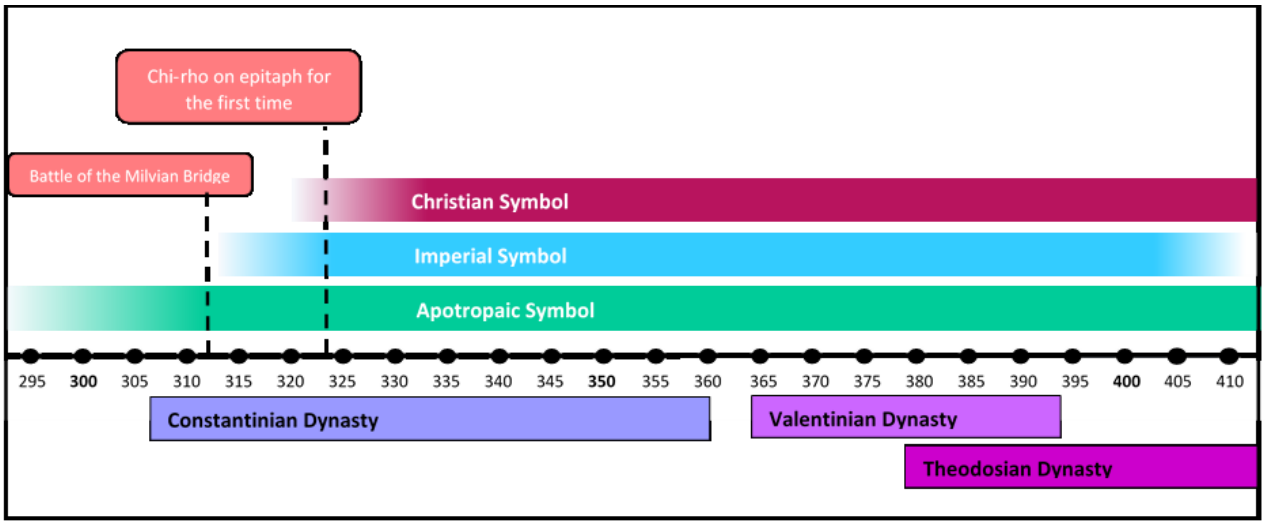

Figure 7.19 A timeline illustrating the multivalent semiotic meanings that the chi-rho held in the fourth century.

By the middle of the fourth century, the chi-rho began to be employed more frequently in funerary inscriptions and in more Christian contexts. The brilliance of the symbol was the multitude of ways in which it could be viewed by the end-user, depending on the context, their culture, and their background.[125] For some, it was intrinsically linked with the Constantinian dynasty, whereas for others, it was a symbol of Christ and his salvation. Throughout its function as a symbol in antiquity – and even continuing in its use by the Church today[126] – the chi-rho also served as a powerful protective device. For this reason, its orientation (backwards, upside-down, sideways) in inscriptions did not matter. For the illiterate Roman, the act of adding it in whatever form activated its apotropaic qualities.

With the increasingly important apotropaic symbolism of the chi-rho, we can begin to understand why the symbol's combination with traditional 'pagan' religious motifs – such as on

[125] Lenski (2016), 11. Lenski argues (2016: 9) that from the very start, the *labarum* was "encoded in dimorphic form and thus susceptible to variant interpretations." I do not, however, believe that this was the case until the middle of the fourth century, and the evidence presented throughout this dissertation has shown that it was initially a military talisman. Indeed, the *labarum* itself also had this encoded message. It was only when the chi-rho was divorced from the *labarum* that it could hold different messages for different viewers.

[126] For example, the chi-rho often decorates the ambry, the place where the Eucharist is stored.

the Hinton St. Mary mosaic, the Frampton mosaic, or objects from the Mildenhall treasure – would not have been necessarily problematic for the average Roman viewer. The example of Nestorius' honorific inscription (*AE* 1990, 211) from Chapter 6 neatly demonstrates this. The chi-rho within a wreath, flanked by two six-sided stars and doves, inscribed at the top of the tablet is intriguing, especially when the inscription mentions Nestorius was the city's *flamen* (priest of the imperial cult). Was the chi-rho a way for the citizens who dedicated the tablet to proclaim Nestorius was a follower of Christ? Was it a statement of the imperial favour bestowed on the city's patron? Both motives are undoubtedly possible.[127] Bridging these hypotheses, however, is the protective symbolism of the chi-rho, especially within a wreath and flanked by doves. According to Lenski, "there is no reason that the pagans of Paestum who dedicated this *tabula patronatus* cannot have used a chi-rho to enhance the power – divine and worldly – of their overtly pagan *patronus*, Aquilius Nestorius."[128] While Lenski's characterization of Nestorius as 'overtly pagan' is excessively dogmatic, his words surrounding the power of the chi-rho are valid. The ubiquitous nature of the chi-rho's protective qualities transcended both religion and secularism.

Finally, although this chapter has divided the three main semiotic meanings of the chi-rho and examined them individually, I would like to emphasize again that the uses of the symbol were not mutually exclusive. As indicated throughout this dissertation, there is no denying the fact that Constantine I adopted the chi-rho as the saving sign of Christ. But sign-users would have interpreted the symbol differently depending on their background and the context in which

[127] Tumolesi (1990: 245) states that the stars flanking the chi-rho bring to mind the solar symbolism of Constantine I's divine vision. She further concludes that the decoration would have been acceptable for a Constantinian *flamen*.
[128] Lenski (2016), 223.

the sign was found. The chi-rho held layers of meaning – dynastic, religious, Constantinian – but common to all was its underlying apotropaic nature.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE TAU-RHO: 'CONSTANTINIAN' MONOGRAM, CHRISTIAN SYMBOL, OR SEMIOTIC SYNONYM FOR THE CHI-RHO?

> *This basic symbol, bringing together the first two letters of the Greek word Christos, had clear Christian associations from at least the early fourth century, and was regularly associated with Constantine's vision on the eve of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. The image appears in two forms in Britain, the 'Constantinian chi-rho' and the simpler rho-cross (lacking the chi, but with a cross against the vertical stroke of the rho).*
>
> Petts (2016), 663

****

This chapter will collate and expand upon the evidence gathered on the tau-rho as presented throughout Part II of this dissertation. It is divided into four sections. The first two parts discuss the symbol's dynastic and Christian signification, while the third addresses the issue of the relationship between the tau-rho and the chi-rho and determines whether or not the two symbols signify the same thing and, therefore, can be used interchangeably. The final section attempts to resolve the narrative about Constantine's vision, as found in Lactantius and Eusebius. Before beginning this analysis, however, I will briefly review some of the key findings regarding the tau-rho found throughout my dissertation.

In Chapter 3, the uses of the tau-rho before the fourth century were explored. The results of this analysis showed that while there were some instances of the tau-rho being used on non-Christian objects before the first century CE, the majority of pre-Constantinian tau-rhos appear in securely Christian contexts. Oftentimes, the tau-rho occurs in scriptural inscriptions as an abbreviation of the Greek word for cross (*σταυρός*) or a derivative thereof. Even before the time

of Constantine, then, there was a clear semiotic link between the tau-rho and Christianity, thus allowing for a Christian interpretation early in the history of the symbol's use.

Chapter 4 discussed Constantine I's vision before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, as found in the accounts of Lactantius and Eusebius. It also explored the use of the 'Constantinian' monogram in the poems of Optatian. Although it is evident from Eusebius' report that the symbol that Constantine saw before the battle was a chi-rho, the same cannot be said for the version of the vision as told by Lactantius nearly a decade earlier. As is evident from the detailed analysis of the two accounts, much scholarly confusion surrounds the wording of Lactantius' description of the symbol. It is unclear whether the author intended to detail a chi-rho or a tau-rho as the 'saving sign' of Christ. In order to align Lactantius' text with that of Eusebius, scholars have attempted to alter the Latin found in Lactantius' surviving manuscript. Despite this, there is still no consensus on which symbol Lactantius intended; or whether or not the question even warrants exploration, as both symbols are often considered interchangeable 'christograms.' But by the time Optatian and Eusebius were writing, the symbol was decisively described – and, in the case of Optatian's patterned poetry, illustrated – as a chi-rho.

When analyzing fourth-century coins for tau-rhos, as found in Chapter 5, it becomes evident that the symbol was rarely employed as the main design device on coins. In contrast, when it does appear, it is often as a part of the issue mark or on the periphery of the coin. It certainly was not deployed in the same fashion as the chi-rho, which was a prevalent symbol on many different coin types and denominations. In contrast, the tau-rho is not found on silver coins, the primary source of pay for Roman soldiers, implying that it was not propagated as a military talisman in the same fashion as the chi-rho. It is only towards the very end of the fourth century, on a series of *solidi* from Thessalonica issued under the authority of Arcadius, that the

tau-rho can be found on the armour of a numismatic portrait of an emperor for the first time, imitating the placement of the chi-rho on the armour of the Constantinians nearly a century earlier.

Although an infrequent symbol in the early fourth-century numismatic evidence, there is some – albeit extremely sparse – indication that the tau-rho was used in Christian inscriptions either before the time of Constantine I (or slightly thereafter), such as the Beratius Nikatoras funerary inscription. Furthermore, whenever the tau-rho is found in inscriptions other than epitaphs, it is always in a Christian context, such as on the columns from Saint Paul's basilica. Indeed, it is the tau-rho, and not the chi-rho, that is found more often in conjunction with the alpha and omega, a firmly established Christian device. As with the numismatic evidence, the tau-rho gains momentum as a symbol towards the end of the fourth century. With these results in mind, I will now discuss the evidence of the tau-rho as a dynastic symbol.

8.1 The Tau-rho as a Dynastic Symbol

As is apparent from the analysis performed in the proceeding chapters, there is very little securely datable evidence to indicate that the tau-rho was ever employed as a military symbol in the fourth century. This result is in direct contrast to the chi-rho, a symbol that was amalgamated with the regular Roman military standard shortly after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, creating a new type of standard: the *labarum*. Throughout the fourth century, the tau-rho is not featured on coins to the same extent or diversity as the chi-rho, such as being held by Victory, being engraved by Victory, or being used as part of the imperial standard. The tau-rho has no connection with military iconography whatsoever until it is found on the cuirass of the obverse

bust of the emperor Arcadius, around eighty years after the chi-rho had first been used on the helmet of the emperor Constantine in a similar fashion.

A series of *solidi* from Ravenna that feature the emperor Honorius holding a long tau-rho might be the only other instance of the use of the symbol with an intended militaristic meaning. The reverse of the coins features the emperor, who is dressed in military attire and holding a sword. He is positioned with one foot on the neck of a serpent-tailed lion, and the Hand of God (*manus Dei)* crowns him from above.[1] However, based on the stylistic similarities between this coin type and other objects, the military symbolism becomes less certain. A bronze statuette of St Peter – said to be from a Roman catacomb dated to the late fourth/early fifth century – has the apostle holding a long tau-rho (see **Figure 8.1**).[2] The long tau-rho (or, equally, the long cross) can also be found in *traditio legis* (the passing of the laws) scenes, where Christ gives responsibility of his Church over to Peter. One example of this type – on the sarcophagus of Geminus from St Trophime (Arles) – features Christ seated on a throne, flanked by two of his apostles (see **Figure 8.2**).[3] One of the apostles, likely Saint Peter, holds a long tau-rho. According to Carder,

Figure 8.1 A bronze statuette of St Peter (Carder 1979, no. 509). The apostle holds a long tau-rho in his left hand. ca. late 4th – early 5th century CE. © Photo: Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Ident. Nr. 1). Photographer: Helgard Weber

[1] *RIC X*. 1310-1311. According to Doyle (2015: 169), the serpent-tailed lion represents the numerous enemies that had posed a challenge to Honorius' power since he had become emperor.
[2] Carder (1979), no. 509.
[3] Elsner (2009), 198. See also Couzin (2015), 6. Interestingly, Christ has a halo with a tau-rho above his head, reminiscent of the use of the chi-rho on the bust of the Hinton St Mary mosaic.

the motif of the long tau-rho signifies Christ's triumph over death, marking Peter as the witness and earthly representation of this miracle.[4] It is perhaps within this context that we should view the iconography of Honorius holding the long tau-rho found on the *solidi* of Ravenna. Like the apostle, the emperor has also become an earthly representation of the ministry of Christ. The tau-rho, then, represents not so much the emperor's militaristic might as his divine right to rule on earth as Christ rules in heaven.

Figure 8.2 A depiction of the *tradition legis* on the Geminus Sarcophagus from Saint Trophime, Arles. A figure on the right, likely St Peter, holds a long tau-rho. A second tau-rho appears above Christ, who is seated in the center arch. ca. beginning of the 5th century CE. "Saint-Trophime d'Arles35, sarcophagi Geminus" by Finoskov, CC BY-SA 3.0. Image in public domain

To conclude this section, it is possible to say that the sparse evidence for the use of the tau-rho as a dynastic or militaristic symbol can be explained within the context of expanding Christian devotion towards the end of the fourth century. It was not a militaristic or dynastic symbol under the Constantinians. However, I contend that by the end of the fourth century, the tau-rho was employed as a dynastic – but not necessarily militaristic – symbol for the Theodosians. In this way, as I discussed in Chapter 5, the tau-rho was intended to relay messages

[4] Carder (1979), 571.

of imperial – Theodosian – authority to the ancient viewer. It was deployed in such a way as to distinguish the Theodosian from the Constantinian dynasty, linking the former to a symbol that, as we shall see, had a long association with the Christian religion.

8.2 THE TAU-RHO AS CHRISTIAN-APOTROPAIC SYMBOL

In Chapter 3, I demonstrated that there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the tau-rho was used as a Christian symbol before the time of Constantine. In pre-fourth century contexts, it is used as an abbreviation on second and third-century papyri fragments of the New Testament for the words *σταυρός* (cross) and *σταυρόω* (to crucify). It is also found on a few early inscriptions, such as the funerary plaque of Beratius Nikatoras, which dates to a time before the construction of the Aurelian wall and depicts several biblical motifs, such as Jonah being expelled from the whale and the good shepherd. These additional motifs on Nikatoras' tombstone help firmly place the tau-rho within a Christian context.

One particular line of evidence that needs to be explored in more detail is the use of 'christograms' on *mensae martyrum*. These martyr tables, which are so-called because of the names of martyrs found on them, were particular to North Africa and were used for Christian ritual feasting. As we saw in Chapter 6, the first datable evidence of a martyr table (dedicated in Médiouna in 329 CE) containing a 'christogram' actually features a tau-rho.[5] This places the symbol not only within a clear Christian context but also on an object that served a ritualistic

[5] The Donatists in North Africa particularly worshipped martyrs (see Frend 1952: 54-55 and 176-177). This form of worship is unsurprising from the group that had denounced the clergy who had renounced their Christianity instead of dying for their beliefs. Whether or not the *mensae martyrum* with 'christograms' discussed here and in Chapter 6 were erected by Donatists is uncertain. It is an intriguing hypothesis, especially since the earliest datable *mensa* features a tau-rho and not a chi-rho (which I established in Chapter 6 was unlikely to have been adopted by the Donatists), but more securely dated evidence is needed to either confirm or deny a connection between the sect and the use of the tau-rho.

function; a function for which the chi-rho is rarely deployed, especially at this early date. The tau-rho is the focal point of the table, unlike periphery 'christograms' on most grave *stelae*, and would have served the whole community, as compared to the ritual feasts held at the tomb of ancestors.

Then, within Constantine's lifetime, the tau-rho had already become associated with the practice of Christianity in North Africa, as compared to the chi-rho, which was used during the early fourth century in the province as a dynastic symbol (such as on milestones). The fact that a chi-rho appears on a *mensa martyrum* from Tixter three decades after the one from Médiouna might indicate that by the 360s, the chi-rho, too, had become a symbol associated with Christian rituals; something that is also demonstrated with the fourth-century Church accoutrements from Britain. In addition to these early examples in inscriptions, the tau-rho continued to be used in Christian contexts from the fourth century onwards. I will now turn to these objects – letters, metal objects, lamps, and gems – some of which, as we will see, feature interesting fourth-century examples of the tau-rho.

Already in use before the time of Constantine, the tau-rho continued to be incorporated in texts from the fourth century onwards. De Bruyn, who analyzed Christian incantations and amulets, determined that certain scribal conventions, such as the tau-rho, were carried over into use in magical texts.[6] Whereas once the symbol had been employed in manuscripts as an abbreviation, by the fourth century, it had come to be used as a freestanding symbol, either individually or in a series, at the beginning or end of the text or a section of the text.[7] We have already encountered this style of implementation on the funerary inscriptions discussed in Chapter 6, where the results showed that when chi-rhos and tau-rhos are used on funerary

[6] de Bruyn (2017), 9.
[7] de Bruyn (2017), 65.

inscriptions, they are often located as freestanding symbols at the beginning or end of the text. Unlike in inscriptions, however, de Bruyn concluded that tau-rhos are found in incantations and on amulets much more frequently than chi-rhos.[8] Blumell found a similar pattern on the letters from Oxyrhynchus. The tau-rho, confirmed in 32 letters from the mid-fourth century onwards, is usually located at the beginning or end of a letter, either by itself or with other symbols.[9] Although both Blumell and de Bruyn fail to speculate as to why the tau-rho is used more frequently than the chi-rho in these contexts, I believe that the tau-rho's more explicit connection to Christianity early on in the development of the use of the symbol and its strong association to the cross would have made its use more suitable in private written correspondence, whether incantations or not. This is in contrast to the chi-rho, which was associated primarily with the imperial family of Constantine in the early fourth century.

The use of the tau-rho on amulets also reveals that the tau-rho held apotropaic properties. Like the chi-rho, the tau-rho is found etched in plaster and limestone around graves, indicating that it was also used as a talisman with protective qualities.[10] De Bruyn states that Christian symbols held these safeguarding powers even when their meaning was unintelligible - or known only to those who were cognizant of the meaning – just by being written down.[11] In the context of plaster and limestone around graves, the etched symbols were enough to provide protection to – or even, perhaps, from – the deceased. De Bruyn's statement also helps to explain why both the chi-rho and the tau-rho are found in so many variations (such as backwards, sideways, upside-down) on epitaphs. A fifth-century example, an amulet with the image of an *orans* featuring a

[8] de Bruyn (2017), 64-65. Chi-rhos are very rarely found in this context. Crosses, however, appear on incantations and amulets approximately two times more frequently than the tau-rho.
[9] Blumell (2012), 45.
[10] For a few examples, see *ICUR* 7298a-e; 8095b; 10753a-h; 11062a-c; 13265a-e; 13266d; 15184a; 17281a; 19883a-g; 19884a-d; 20322a-d; 21573a-h; and 22917a.
[11] de Bruyn (2017), 66.

tau-rho to the right, highlights the relative unimportance of the actual reading of the intended message (see **Figure 8.3**).[12] The back of the amulet has three lines of Pseudo-Greek text, but its unintelligibility did not matter to the wearer, as it still held protective properties. Like the Pseudo-Greek writing on the amulet, the configuration of the symbol was not as important as the fact that it was engraved in the first place. At a time when the majority of the population had minimal literacy skills, a perfect reproduction of the symbol was not needed; it was the ritual of writing and the intention behind it that created its power.

Figure 8.3 An amulet featuring an *orans*. A tau-rho appears to the right of the *orans*. ca. 5th century CE.
Drawn by author (based on Spier 2007a, no.641.)

However, it should be noted that the 'Christian' devoutness of the authors of the amulets and incantations that de Bruyn studied is partly determined by the use of tau-rhos and crosses.[13] This is problematic, as it rests on the assumption that the tau-rho would have only been used by Christians. Although it has been demonstrated throughout this dissertation that the symbol itself had Christian signification, its use by certain scribes did not mean that the writers were themselves practicing Christians. As de Bruyn rightly points out, in order to determine the

[12] Spier (2007a), no. 641. I question whether or not this is actually an *orans*, since both hands are not raised in prayer. For more on the development of *orantes* in Greco-Roman and early Christian art, see: Moss (2010: 63-55); and Torjesen (1998: 42-53).
[13] de Bruyn (2017), 64.

meaning of the use of the symbol by a particular scribe, one should factor in the other characteristics of the object under consideration.[14] If it was relatively common for Christians to continue to use 'pagan' iconography in the fourth century (see below), then it is feasible that 'pagans' could also employ Christian symbols for the apotropaic function they held, devoid of any intended religious devoutness.

In the last chapter, we saw that the chi-rho is a prevalent symbol found on metal objects from Roman Britain, possibly within the context of church accoutrements. The tau-rho, too, is found on metal objects from some of the same sites. For example, the Hoxne treasure (refer back to Ch. 7, fn. 68 for more information on the dating of the treasure), which included five spoons with chi-rhos, contains many more objects with tau-rhos: such as ten silver spoons,[15] ten silver ladles,[16] and a gold necklace.[17] Unlike the spoons from Hoxne with chi-rhos, which are flanked by alphas and omegas, the tau-rhos appear on the spoons without any additional decoration. On the other hand, all of the ladles are elaborately decorated with vines running down the lengths of their handles with several of them terminating in a rosette (see **Figure 8.4**). The tau-rho appears in a circle at the point where the handle joins with the bowl of the ladle. The symbol is elaborately engraved, composed of two lines that flare outwards as they terminate. On either side of the tau-rho is a dolphin, its tail jutting outwards from the handle. Watts states that early Christians adopted the dolphin as a motif associated with death and baptism.[18] If the ladles were

[14] de Bruyn (2017), 65.
[15] Johns (2010), nos. 91-100.
[16] Johns (2010), nos. 52-61. There is a second set of ten ladles, but they are less ornately decorated and do not features tau-rhos.
[17] Johns (2010), no. 4.
[18] Watts (1991), 205. Dolphins were a symbol for the secure transition of the soul into the afterlife after death (see Wood 2018: 85). Therefore, the motif would have appealed to Christians as well as 'pagans.' In the Roman world, dolphins are found most commonly in bath-house mosaics (Ferris 2018: 32). They were a popular motif around the Mediterranean, and in the provinces, such as Roman Britain, dolphins may have symbolized Roman military power and conquest (Ferris 2018: 32-33). For more on the use of dolphins in the ancient world, see Ferris (2018: 30-39).

part of a church's accoutrements, the stylistic choice of dolphins and tau-rhos was appropriate for the services in which the silverware would have been used. However, the apotropaic symbolism of the dolphin (see Ch. 7, fn. 117) might also have influenced its inclusion on the ladles and therefore interpreting the symbol with a 'new' Christian association with baptism and death is not necessary.

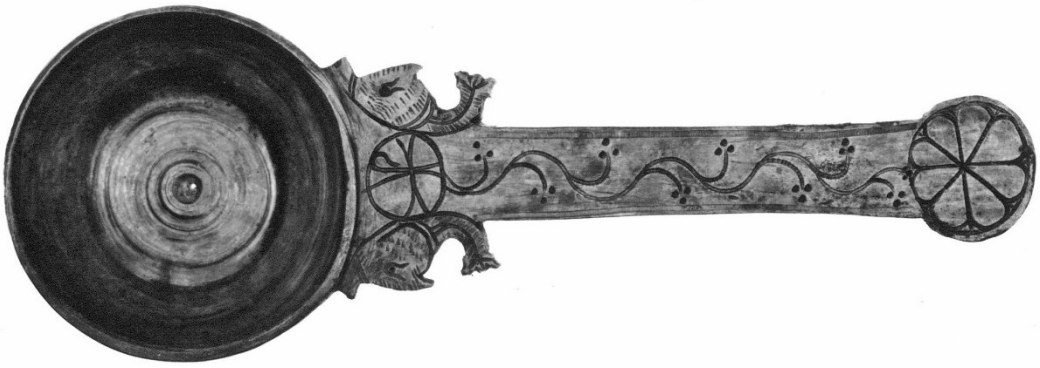

Figure 8.4 A silver ladle from the Hoxne hoard in Suffolk (Johns 2010, no. 54). A tau-rho appears in a circle at the joint between the handle and the bowl. ca. beginning of 5th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1994,0408.54)

Figure 8.5 A gold necklace from the Hoxne hoard in Suffolk (Johns 2010, no. 4). A beaded tau-rho is welded to the hook that functions as a clasp. ca. beginning of 5th century CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1994,0408.4)

The final object with a tau-rho from Hoxne, a gold necklace, is a rare instance of jewelry to feature the symbol (see **Figure 8.5**). The necklace is a plain gold triple loop-in-loop chain. A hook at one end of the chain can be fed through a loop, which functions as the clasp. Welded to the bottom of the hook is a beaded wire ring within which sits a beaded tau-rho.[19] This unique object is noteworthy not only because of the tau-rho but also because of the location of the symbol on the necklace. It is adjoined to the clasp of the necklace, and therefore it is a safe supposition that the symbol was not meant to be the main focal point of the design. Indeed, as we have seen, it is very rare that the tau-rho is ever the central motif on an object. In this particular case, the tau-rho may not have even been meant to be viewed since the symbol would not have been seen unless the wearer wore their hair off of the back of their neck. But I believe that it did not matter whether or not the symbol was seen by anyone other than the sign-user. It served an apotropaic function and protected its wearer simply by being a part of the necklace.

Lastly, we will turn to a silver object, which is of particular interest for this discussion. It is a gold-gilded silver casket found as a part of the Esquiline treasure from Rome (see **Figure 8.6**).[20] Called the 'Projecta casket' because of the woman's name found in the inscription, it is an elaborately decorated rectangular casket that may have been a wedding gift for Projecta and Secundus, the couple portrayed in a wreath at the top of the casket.[21] Directly below the roundel with the couple is a panel featuring the goddess Venus, who is surrounded by her sea-creature attendants. She sits in a shell and holds a mirror as she does her toilette. The two panels on either side of this scene depict Nereids, one riding a hippocampus and the other riding a *ketos*. A panel

[19] Johns (2010: 212-213) calls the symbol a chi-rho, but upon inspection of images of the object it is actually a tau-rho.
[20] Painter 1977a: 5-8.
[21] See Shelton (1979), no. 310; and Lee (2013), 70. According to Elsner (2007: 204), however, there is no reason to assume that the casket was created for the couple's wedding, or, indeed, that the couple portrayed is even the Projecta and Secundus mentioned in the inscription.

Figure 8.6 The 'Projecta casket' from the Esquiline treasure from Rome.
Top: The top of the casket features Projecta and Secundus in a wreath held by cupids.
Middle: A close up of the panel directly below the couple, which has the goddess Venus performing her *toilette* surrounded by her sea-creature attendants. There is an inscription directly below the Venus panel.
Bottom: A drawing of the inscription on the casket. A tau-rho procedes the inscription, which wishes Secundus and Projecta a life in Christ. ca. 380 CE.
© The Trustees of the British Museum (no. 1866,1229.1)

behind the couple in the roundel features a procession to the baths; a theme carried through on the bottom panels of the casket. The panel directly below the panel of Venus features a more specific scene with Projecta performing her toilette in the accompaniment of her attendants. Therefore, there is a direct visual association between Projecta and the 'pagan' goddess.[22] This connection makes the inscription on the casket even more intriguing, as it states: *SECVNDE ET PROIECTA VIVATIS IN CHRISTO (Secundus and Projecta, may you live in Christ*). A tau-rho precedes the inscription, and, of further interest, the name of Christ is spelt in its entirety and not abbreviated with a chi-rho. The tau-rho, once again, is found in a Christian context, even though there is a juxtaposition between the 'pagan' imagery and the Christian inscription.[23] However, as we have already seen, in the fourth century – a time of religious negotiation – it was not uncommon for 'pagan' and Christian elements to coexist on the same object.

Finally, two more categories of objects could be examined in a discussion surrounding the Christian interpretation of the tau-rho: lamps and gems. However, these two groups of objects, especially gems, are very difficult to date with any precision. Moreover, it cannot be said with certainty that any lamps featuring a tau-rho date to the fourth century.[24] For this reason, I will not explore the use of the tau-rho on lamps further, except to say that there is evidence on lamps of the appropriation of 'pagan' motifs and the symbol's apotropaic function, two common

[22] Shelton (1979), 330.
[23] Elsner (1995: 253-255) speculates whether or not this combination of antithetic religious themes necessitates emptying one (Venus) or the other (the chi-rho and invocation) of their meaning. Based on the results of my analysis, I do not believe that this 'either/or' mentality needs to apply in these cases, nor do I think, as Elsner speculates, that the viewer needed to reconcile the two images somehow. In contrast, I speculate that it was the purview of each sign-user to determine the signification of the combination of images, without necessitating a strict 'pagan'/Christian dichotomy of viewing. For Projecta, for instance, the comparison of herself with Venus may have held more weight than for anyone else viewing/using the object.
[24] According to Schoolman (2017: 169), it is not until the middle of the fifth century that lamps with unequivocal Christian motifs become prevalent. He also states, rightly, that an individual owning a lamp with a chi-rho cannot be used to argue the religious affiliation of the owner, since even 'pagans' could have owned lamps with these symbols.

themes in the art we have already assessed thus far.[25] Whether or not to include a discussion on gems, the final category of objects, is slightly more complex. There are four gems with a tau-rho included in Spier's *Late Antique and Early Christian Gems* – the authority on Christian gems from Late Antiquity – which he dates to the fourth century or earlier, based on the material and shape of the stones.[26] Because Spier does not date these examples any later than the fourth century and because his book on Christian gems is the authority on the subject, I have included them in my analysis.

Figure 8.7 A red jasper gem featuring a negative image of a tau-rho on its side. ca. 3rd or 4th century CE. Drawn by author (based on Spier 2007a, no. 138)

Figure 8.8 A nicolo gem that features a tau-rho between the busts of a woman and a man. ca. late 4th century CE.
Drawn by author (based on Spier 2007a, 26)

[25] For example, two hanging bronze lamps from Italy feature handles in the form of griffins, a popular motif in early Christianity (Brown 1979: 624). Both lamps feature a tau-rho atop the head of the griffin and tau-rhos on the sides of the body. One of the lamps depicts a dolphin (no. 560), while the other has alphas and omegas flanking the tau-rho (no. 561). Although there is an appropriation of 'pagan' motifs, it is not necessary to assume that these motifs imbued a new Christian meaning. Rather, all of these motifs were apotropaic. The apotropaic use of lamps is supported by Schoolman (2017: 166), who states that apart from their primary function illuminating buildings, lamps could also be employed in funerary, devotional, and apotropaic contexts. Furthermore, as a result of his study of Christian and 'pagan' motifs on lamps, he concluded that the motifs on lamps, whether 'pagan' or Christian, did not ultimately influence their function. Rather, it is the contexts in which lamps are found that indicate their use (2017: 174-177). I believe, however, that the key of these motifs on lamps is not in their particular religious connotations, but in their magical properties.

[26] Spier (2007a), 12-13. Spier uses gems with portraits as a starting point for stylistically dating gems and then used material and shape to form a chronology of gem types. He does admit that dating gems with any precision is difficult and stresses that styles current in one century may have continued into another.

The simplest example, a third or fourth-century red jasper gem, features the negative image of a tau-rho on its side (see **Figure 8.7**).[27] It is shaped like an 'X' with the top left arm bent in a loop, which is highly reminiscent of Lactantius' description of the symbol Constantine saw in his vision. A second example, a nicolo gem that possibly dates to the late fourth century,[28] has a tau-rho between the busts of a man and a woman (see **Figure 8.8**).[29] The couple on the gem faces each other. Similar in style – and datable between the middle and the end of the fourth century – is a jasper stone that depicts two men facing each other (see **Figure 8.9**).[30] They are likely the apostles Peter and Paul. Below them is written ANOYBIWN, the name of the ring's owner.[31] The style of both this ring and the ring of the married couple is very similar to several of the gold-glass pieces with chi-rhos described in the previous chapter.

Figure 8.9 A jasper gem that features two men facing each other. They are likely the apostles Peter and Paul. ca. late 4th century.
Drawn by author (based on Spier 2007a, no. 69)

[27] Spier (2007a), no. 138.
[28] Spier (2007a), 21.
[29] Spier (2007a), no. 26.
[30] Spier (2007a), no. 451.
[31] According to Spier (2007b, no. 69), the name on the gem was common in Egypt.

Interestingly, there are no surviving examples of tau-rhos on the gold-glass roundels.[32] The strong stylistic similarities between the gold glasses with chi-rhos and the gems with tau-rhos might indicate that gold-glass objects had fallen out of use by the time the tau-rho had gained popularity as a symbol; the same about which cannot be said for gems, since the use of both symbols is attested on them. However, there is another –more intriguing – possibility that the tau-rho was more prevalent on gems than gold glass because of the appeal of having a visual reference to the crucifixion of Christ on a portable object worn by the devotee.[33] The tau-rho marked the owner as a follower of Christ, without necessarily signalling the same political implications as the chi-rho, especially before the end of the fourth century and the tau-rho's adoption by the Theodosians.

Figure 8.10 A brown sard gem that features Hercules, with his head bent downwards and Eros. A tau-rho appears between Hercules arm and leg. ca. early imperial period.
Drawn by author (based on Spier 2007a, no. 184)

[32] This conclusion is seconded by Garipzanov (2018: 62) who states that the chi-rho is the sole symbolic motif to appear on gold glass.
[33] For more information on the theory that the tau-rho is the first visual representation of the crucifixion of Christ, see my discussion of Hurtado in Chapters 1 and 3.

The final intaglio to be discussed is a damaged brown sard gem that dates – on stylistic grounds - to the early imperial period.[34] Spier adds the gem to his catalogue as an example of a 'pagan' gem that was altered at a later date with a Christian symbol.[35] It features Hercules, with his head bent downwards in submission, holding one hand up and the head of his lion-skin cloak in the other (see **Figure 8.10**).[36] On his shoulder sits Eros who holds an empty quiver. However, the most noteworthy motif is the tau-rho, which has been engraved on the right side of the gem between Hercules' bent arm and leg. According to Evans, a Christian owner who misinterpreted the iconography as St Christopher carrying Christ added the symbol at a later date.[37] This interpretation seems to be a bit of a logical stretch, especially since the adult male is completely nude and the child has wings. On the other hand, Spier states that the meaning behind the addition is unclear but agrees that the tau-rho was added to the intaglio later.[38] However, I cannot entirely agree with this assessment either. If the tau-rho had been added to the gem at a later date, the choice of location, crammed between Hercules' leg and arm, is odd. There is a large empty field of space to the left of the figure that would have been a more logical location for the addition, and it would share more similarities with how the tau-rho appears in the field on coins. Since the bottom half of the intaglio does not survive, it is impossible to tell if the tau-rho was initially placed where it was for any stylistic reasons. Furthermore, even if the gem does date to the early imperial period, there is nothing to preclude that the tau-rho was included on the intaglio at that time. The symbol was, after all, a Christian scribal device in the second century

[34] Spier (2007a), no. 184
[35] Spier (2007a), 39.
[36] Evans (1938), 37-38.
[37] Evans (1938), 38.
[38] Spier (2007a), 39. Spier argues that the style of the tau-rho is reminiscent to those that appear on the coins from the time of Constantine onwards. While the tau-rho is similar to those that appear on coins (refer back to **Figure 5.8**), the shape that it takes might have more to do with the space in which it is being placed. Furthermore, it is also similar to the tau-rho found on the coins of Herod (refer back to **Figure 3.7**) and therefore the design of the tau-rho cannot establish the time at which it was added to the intaglio.

CE. Finally, as we have seen throughout this dissertation, adding a Christian symbol on an object does not necessitate a complete Christocentric reinterpretation of the remaining iconography. The intaglio's owner, likely a Christian because of the long association of the symbol with the religion, could have also enjoyed the symbolism of Eros conquering even the strongest of heroes as the owner of the Projecta casket could have liked the juxtaposition of the matron with Venus.

In conclusion, the symbolic development of the tau-rho is entrenched in the early history of Christian symbolism. It is found as a scribal device before the time of Constantine, and there is evidence, although sparse, to suggest that it was used on other objects before that time as well. The tau-rho is rarely deployed on objects as a freestanding symbol with no additional iconographic elements, indicating that it was a peripheral symbol that lent meaning to the tableau of an object's imagery. Frequently, the symbol is connected with saints and may have even been used on Church accoutrements. Although more firmly connected with other types of Christian motifs, such as the alpha and omega, the tau-rho – like the chi-rho – is also found in the fourth century in conjunction with traditional religious motifs, such as the 'pagan' gods. This is unsurprising in a century of religious negotiation, where various sections of the population were vying for religious authority. The following section will compare the various uses of the tau-rho and the chi-rho as symbols in more detail and determine whether the semiotic traits of the former are shared with those of the latter, as were detailed in Chapter 7.

8.3 The Interchangeability of the Tau-rho and the Chi-rho

The similarities and differences between the chi-rho and the tau-rho have been a major theme explored throughout this dissertation. The evidence provided in each chapter has led to the conclusion that the two symbols were not synonymous and were, indeed, distinct from each

other. For example, as we saw in Chapter 3, the chi-rho was a 'pagan' symbol before being adapted by Constantine, whereas the tau-rho was already in use as a Christian scribal symbol in the second century CE. We also saw in Chapters 5 and 6 that there were used on coins and in inscriptions in different and distinct ways. Additionally, the separate ways each symbol was deployed in art – in the fourth century and beyond – indicate that the ancient viewer distinguished between their meanings. Even though this might have been the case in antiquity, many modern scholars have continued to conflate the meaning behind these two early 'Christ' symbols. The quote from Petts at the beginning of this chapter neatly encapsulates this tendency. He begins his chapter "Christianity in Roman Britain" in the *Handbook of Roman Britain* (2016) by assuming that the chi-rho (which he calls the 'Constantinian' chi-rho) and the tau-rho (the rho-cross) are both, in fact, 'chi-rhos,' which we have seen cannot be taken for granted.

An example of a 'Christian' symbol found on a cameo can serve to highlight some of the complexities around identifying these early 'Christ' symbols and the problems associated with assuming they all held the same, or a similar, meaning. The 'Rothschild cameo,' created in a classicizing style, depicts a male and female bust.[39] The male wears a wreath on his head, the central pendant of which features a symbol described by Garipzanov (2018) as a chi-rho.[40] And, indeed, the iconography is reminiscent of the silver multiples issued from Ticinum under Constantine I, which depict a chi-rho on the emperor's helmet. Some scholars have identified the couple in the cameo as the emperor Honorius and Maria, his wife.[41] However, this attribution is

[39] Garipzanov (2018), 77.
[40] Garipzanov (2018), 77. Garipzanov is not the only author to call the symbol a chi-rho, see also Sande (2001: 145). Spier (2007a: 131, no. 717) calls the symbol a 'christogram' which is also problematic as it places assumes Christian signification on the symbol, which it may not actually hold.
[41] Elsner (1998), 86; Fowden (1999), 35; Garipzanov (2018), 77; and Sande (2001), 148. The cameo would have been made in celebration of their wedding in 398 CE. According to Spier (2007a: 131, no. 717), a later (Middle Byzantine) addition names the couple as the saints Sergios and Bacchos. The figure behind the first, however, is clearly a female.

uncertain, and the emperor Constantius II has also been suggested for the male bust.[42] Based on the evidence provided in Chapters 5 through 7, the direct association between the symbol and the emperor would suggest identification with a member of the Constantinian dynasty. However, upon closer inspection of the cameo, it becomes apparent that the symbol within the central pendant is not, in fact, a chi-rho but an iota-chi (or six-sided star). Since there is no other distinguishing imagery, it is impossible to clearly label the symbol as Christian or use it as evidence towards the identity of the imperial figures. By describing the symbol as a chi-rho, Garipzanov – who goes so far as the say that the symbol was used to link Honorius with the first Christian emperor – adds layers of meaning to the object (such as dynastic, religious, and military) that a six-sided star does not necessarily denote in the context.

The 'Rothschild cameo' illustrates how conflating the iota-chi with the chi-rho can be misleading. The same is true for the chi-rho and tau-rho, which can be even more problematic as both symbols gained popularity during the course of the fourth century. Part of the reason for the conflation between the two symbols emanates from the false belief that they are both unambiguously Christian symbols, thus erasing any additional layers of meaning. Marucchi even goes so far as to state that at the end of the fourth century, the customary shape of the chi-rho had shifted and become the tau-rho.[43] Decades later, Gordon wrote that the monogrammatic cross – in other words, the tau-rho – signified 'Christ' and was a post-fourth-century form of the chi-rho.[44] Even disregarding Gordon's theory about the signification of the symbol, his conclusion that the tau-rho was a post-fourth-century chi-rho is clearly erroneous, as indicated by much of the reliably dated numismatic and epigraphic evidence detailed in Chapters 5 and 6.

[42] Beckwith (1979), 79; and Spier (2007a), 131, no. 717.
[43] Marucchi (1912), 60. As we saw in the introduction to this dissertation, this theory is supported by Thomas (1981: 86-88).
[44] Gordon (1983), 180.

Moreover, more recent scholarship does not support his hypothesis.[45] Nevertheless, the assumption that the tau-rho stands for 'Christ' is still common in scholarship, with Goodson calling the chi-rho, tau-rho, and iota-chi all insignia that represent the word *χριστὸς*.[46] Even Hurtado, who has compellingly argued that the tau-rho is the first visual representation of the crucifixion of Jesus, states that by the fourth century, the tau-rho had lost its particular meaning of crucifixion and had become a freestanding symbol that, like the rest of the christograms, was a Christian symbol used to refer to Christ.[47] The amulets and incantations discussed above do seem to indicate that the tau-rho had become a freestanding device by the fourth century, in that it was no longer used in texts as a direct abbreviation for *σταυρός* (σⲢός). And, indeed, it does not occur on any of the letters from Oxyrhynchus as a scribal device.[48] However, the sparsity of chi-rhos on amulets, incantations, and letters indicates that the two symbols were not directly transposable with each other, as, at the very least, there was a preference for the use of one symbol over the other in certain contexts.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Marucchi refers to the tau-rho and chi-rho as the same symbol and even states that pre-Constantinian uses of the chi-rho refer to the cross.[49] Although Marucchi was writing at the turn of the twentieth century,[50] amalgamating the meaning of the two symbols is still done in more recent scholarship. While examining textual abbreviations in Latin epitaphs, Stern (2008) refers to an underlined P symbol as a chi-rho.[51] When one examines the images that Stern provides for her discussion on the symbol, however, it

[45] See, for example, Bardill (2012) 162-166; Garipzanov (2018), 70; Longenecker (2015), 106-110; and Spier (2007a).
[46] Goodson (2017), 255.
[47] Hurtado (2017), 31-32.
[48] Blumell (2012), 45.
[49] Marucchi (1912), 60.
[50] The original publication date of his monograph is 1912.
[51] Stern (2008), 239.

is clear that she is actually referencing a tau-rho. More recently still, Eger (2017) uses the term 'Christian monogram' to refer to both symbols, although he does stipulate in a footnote that the chi-rho traditionally signifies Christ's name, which the tau-rho does not.[52] While not every scholar blurs the meaning of the two symbols – for example, Bardill is a notable exception[53] – the trend to do so when discussing Christian symbols in the fourth century is troublesome. Although the tau-rho and the chi-rho may have overlapped in certain ways and may have even been employed in similar contexts, they were two distinct symbols with separate semiotic uses (see **Figure 8.11**). At the most basic level, the tau-rho had been a Christian symbol for a more extended period than the chi-rho and did not have the same connection to the Constantinian dynasty. These two points alone indicate it was a distinct symbol from the chi-rho.

Figure 8.11 A representation of the intersection between the uses of the chi-rho and the tau-rho

Finally, the linguistic evidence also reveals that the chi-rho and the tau-rho were not directly interchangeable symbols. As discussed in detail in Chapter 3, all but the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ are dropped to form the chi-rho monogram (suspension), whereas

[52] Eger (2017), 290.
[53] See Bardill's book *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age.*

the tau-rho ligature substitutes the middle letters of the Greek word for cross (contraction). Early Christian writers preferred to use contractions when abbreviating words, whereas other non-Christian scribes would often use suspension in their writing. These abbreviating techniques further suggest that the tau-rho originated as a Christian symbol, while the chi-rho did not.

In conclusion, I am not arguing that every person throughout the Roman Empire would have been able to grasp the (sometimes) nuanced differences in meaning between the chi-rho and the tau-rho in every context. Indeed, according to semiotic theory, that would have been impossible as each person's individual experiences (location, time period, status, etcetera) would have influenced how the information for each symbol was coded. Nevertheless, I am stressing that the chi-rho and the tau-rho were *overall* applied in art in different ways and that scholars should be cognizant of these differences when discussing the use of these symbols in articles and monographs.

8.4 A Final Word on the Accounts of Lactantius and Eusebius

In Chapter 4, I explored the accounts of Constantine's divine vision as told by Lactantius and Eusebius. Considering these primary accounts within the framework of the material evidence presented throughout this dissertation, by the time Constantine had had his vision in 312 CE, the tau-rho would have been in use as a New Testament scribal abbreviation on papyri for a few centuries.[54] Therefore, the tau-rho might have been a symbol directly connected to the Christian religion that was known to Lactantius when he was writing. Moreover, although there is no concrete proof that Lactantius, a native of North Africa who may have been writing his treatise in Gaul, was familiar with the scribal devices used on New Testament papyri (found in Egypt), it

[54] Blumell (2012), 44.

is entirely plausible that he encountered the symbol sometime during his Christian education, travels, and life at court. Indeed, since Constantine's vision revolved around receiving a sign from the *Christian* God, there is a possibility that the tau-rho was an accessible symbol about which Lactantius was aware that could be easily deployed by the author in his account of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.

By the following decade, the chi-rho had gradually become solidified as the saving sign of Christ. Around the time Eusebius was writing *Vita Constantini*, the chi-rho had already been established as an imperial insignia on some milestones in North Africa and as a military device on some of Constantine's coins, thus linking the symbol more directly to Constantine, his vision, and the imperial family. By including the chi-rho – as opposed to the tau-rho – in his version of events, Eusebius helped to establish the 'Constantinian' Christian symbol that was propelled into use in other contexts, such as funerary inscriptions.

When we consider the period of Constantine's reign and the religious context in which they were writing, the accounts of Lactantius and Eusebius do not need to be reconciled. Even though they were detailing the same event, the two authors were writing about different symbols; they were writing about the symbols with which they were familiar at the time they were writing. All of this was taking place at a time of religious negotiation in the court of the first Christian emperor, who was not merely concerned with religious matters but was also navigating his place in the history of the Roman Empire.

8.5 Concluding Observations

This chapter has focused on the tau-rho as an early Christian device. **Figure 8.12** gives a breakdown of the various types of applications that the tau-rho held in the fourth century, as

detailed throughout this chapter. As we have seen, before the middle of the fourth century, the tau-rho was a scribal abbreviation and plausibly the first visual representation of the crucifixion of Jesus. Its use is attested in securely datable Christian contexts before the reign of Constantine. Since the fourth century was a time of religious transformation and artistic negotiation, the symbol could be added to scenes with the traditional Roman gods without taking away from any intended Christian meaning. The pan-religious artistic examples found in this chapter also provide cautionary tales. If the tau-rho, an established Christian symbol, could be used with traditional 'pagan' iconography without any of the imagery superseding the meaning of each other, then so too could the chi-rho. It was, after all, a much more fluid Christian symbol as it developed throughout the fourth century, might not have necessarily modified the meaning of the rest of the iconography in which it was placed.

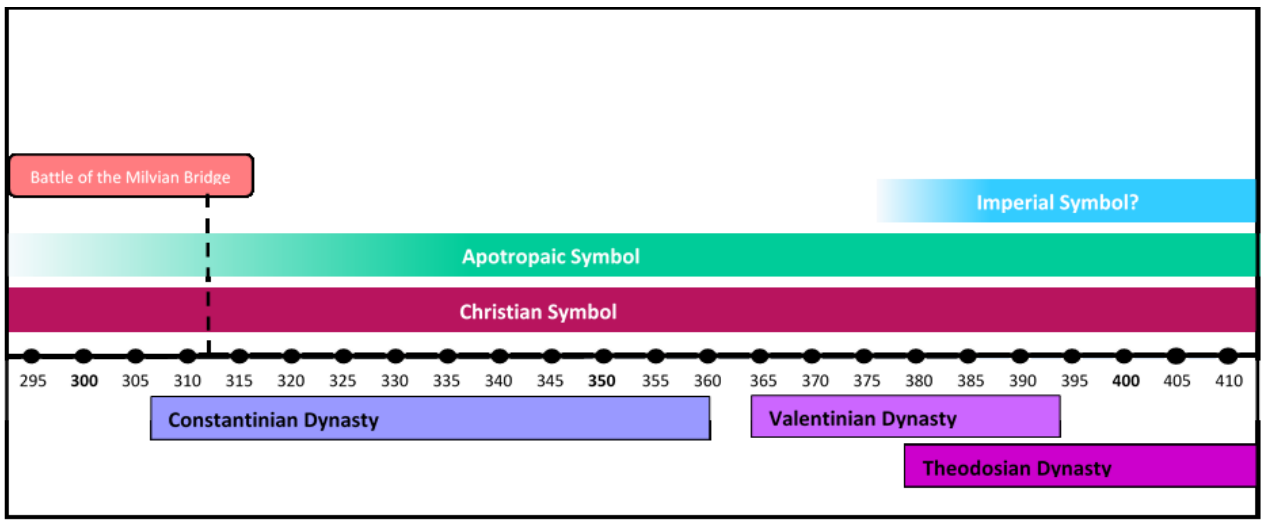

Figure 8.12 A timeline illustrating the multivalent semiotic meanings that the tau-rho held in the fourth century.

Secondly, unlike the chi-rho, there is little evidence datable to the fourth century to suggest that the tau-rho was employed as a military symbol. Despite this, there is some indication that towards the end of the fourth century, it had become an imperial symbol for the Theodosian dynasty. This usage is especially apparent in its use on the coins of Arcadius and

Honorius. For the former, the symbol appears on the emperor's cuirass, a parallel to the initial use of the chi-rho on Constantine's coins. In the second example, Honorius holds a long version of the tau-rho: similar to how earlier fourth-century emperors held the standard with the chi-rho on coins.

Finally, the tau-rho is not interchangeable with the chi-rho. The symbols were derived from two separate Greek words and were abbreviated using different scribal conventions, they developed their use on different types of objects, and they were used as devices in the fourth century in different ways. There are certainly contexts in which the symbols intersect, especially towards the end of the fourth century, when both have a more generic Christian meaning and are used as apotropaic symbols. But in the same way that followers might distinguish a Latin cross from a Greek cross today, even though both are crosses that can function as talismans, so too were the tau-rho and chi-rho distinct from each other.

CONCLUSION

> *An image's universality rests not on its potential for abstraction…but on the capacity of the viewer to grasp in the concrete particularity of the image a universal affectivity. The image defines a particular constellation of affective energy that is not foreign to the viewer but that has not, until her encounter with this image, been formulated in quite this way.*
>
> Margaret Miles (2006), 29
> *Image as Insight: Understanding in Western Christianity*

****

My aim throughout this dissertation has been to supplement the secondary scholarship surrounding the 'Constantinian' monogram in the fourth century and create a more fulsome narrative of its development as a symbol, not only by reflecting on what the ancient sources had to say about it but also by examining how it was deployed at the cross-section of context and culture in art. As we saw in Chapter 1, previous scholarship (such as Black, Longenecker, and Sulzberger) has focused primarily on the Christian signification of the 'Constantinian' monogram, linking it to other Christian motifs such as the alpha and the omega, and using its presence on artifacts to date them, usually to the fourth century. A few authors (such as Bardill, Bruun, and Garipzanov), on the other hand, have emphasized its connection to the Constantinian family, highlighting its use as a military and dynastic device. In more recent years, scholarship (from authors such as Drake, Fox, and Frakes) has turned to a multivalent interpretation of the monogram and, although my dissertation falls within this third group of scholarship, it challenges the notion that the symbol was ideal because of its versatility, which allowed it to be interpreted differently by each sign-user encountering it, thus appealing to sign-users from

different cultural and religious backgrounds.[1] Instead, we should consider the symbol's universal appeal across the Roman Empire as a result of the layers of meaning the 'Constantinian' monogram gradually came to hold and, above all, the apotropaic function underlying all of them.

Margaret Miles' assessment of the universality of an image quoted at the beginning of this conclusion allows us to reflect on the universal nature of the 'Constantinian' monogram. As we have seen, symbols convey meaning at the intersection of sign-user background, culture, and context. But for a symbol to be effective, it cannot be abstract; rather it must be able to affect the viewer because they have a specific understanding of what it symbolizes. The key takeaway from this study of the 'Constantinian' monogram is that it appealed to sign-users from diverse religious and socio-economic backgrounds because it functioned as a talisman across all contexts. The common apotropaic element behind the 'Constantinian' monogram had further layers of meaning added to it over time. As the ripples that emanate from a stone tossed into a lake are strongest at the centre, so too was the imperial signification of the 'Constantinian' monogram – here, specifically the chi-rho – strongest the closer in time its use was to the life of Constantine. Its association with Constantine was not geographically diluted as it was propagated throughout the empire, rather over time it began to be associated more and more with Christianity and less and less with the Constantinian dynasty. But even though the waves coming from the tossed stone are weaker the further out they are from the epicentre of the disturbance, they are still present. Likewise, the use of the 'Constantinian' monogram after Constantine's death could harken back to his imperial authority.

[1] See, for example, Drake (2004: 204); Fox (1987: 616); and Frakes (2006:104). I think this assessment is too simplistic and ignores the context in which the symbol was being seen by the sign-user. It also assumes that sign-users were either ignorant of the other meanings the sign held or they could consciously choose the meaning they applied to the sign.

Aside from Lactantius' description of the 'Constantinian' monogram as a tau-rho – a possible indication of his knowledge of the tau-rho as a pre-Constantinian Christian scribal device – my dissertation has concretely demonstrated that it was the chi-rho, a pre-fourth-century non-religious symbol, that Constantine adopted as his saving sign. The fact that the chi-rho was not an established *nomina sacra* used by Christian scribes made it the perfect political symbol for Constantine to adapt, especially considering its apotropaic roots. Unlike the tau-rho, which was likened to the cross upon which Jesus died, the chi-rho was not an established Christian symbol and thus it could be more easily molded by the imperial court into the divine sign bestowed upon Constantine by God.

The evidence presented in this dissertation has shown that the chi-rho and tau-rho were not used synonymously in the fourth century. The chi-rho was strongly associated with the military, especially with its use on the new imperial standard developed under Constantine, the *labarum*. Surprisingly, even on graves, the two symbols are distinguishable, with the tau-rho being more explicitly linked with Christianity, appearing more frequently with the alpha and omega and with mentions of the Church. Nor was the tau-rho a later version of the chi-rho. Even though it was used more frequently in the latter half of the fourth century, the tau-rho existed as a Christian symbol much earlier. An unexpected outcome of my analysis has been the link between the tau-rho and the Theodosian dynasty, a parallel to how the chi-rho was deployed by the Constantinian family. The connection with the Theodosians might explain the increased popularity of the tau-rho towards the end of the fourth century and is a theme that could be enriched with future research.

Also unexpectedly, there is very little evidence – with some exceptions, such as coins – for geographical differences in the use of the chi-rho and tau-rho throughout the empire. Nor is

there evidence for the systematic spread of the symbols or their particular use by specific Christian enclaves. Even with the evidence provided by coins, that chi-rhos appear more frequently on coins from Western mints and tau-rhos on coins from Eastern mints, we might consider it the result of the gradual shift of the imperial seat of power from the West to the East rather than any preference for one symbol over the other. And although the archaeological record provides us with some indication that the symbols were deployed in some areas in very specific ways – for instance, the milestones from Northern Africa – the evidence is limited to the extent that conclusions are difficult to draw with any certainty.

This leads me to again stress the nature of my data sample, focusing mainly on datable numismatic and epigraphic evidence, which might limit the generalized application of my conclusions. But while the scope of my dissertation was narrowed in some ways by this approach, it nonetheless provides new chronological insight into the development of the chi-rho and tau-rho in the fourth century. Furthermore, by opening up the discussion of the symbols in Chapters 7 and 8 to include other artefacts datable to the fourth century, we can see that the trends found in the data sample of coins and inscriptions are generally applicable to all fourth-century objects that feature the symbols. To better understand the implications of these results, further research might broaden the geographical and chronological scope of the material evidence studied to see if the patterns found with coins and inscriptions hold true for other types of objects and thus enrich my initial research. Another avenue to explore from the data collected is if there is any indication of gender/age associations with the use of either the chi-rho or the tau-rho on funerary inscriptions.

My dissertation began with a quotation from John Stuart Mill who reflected on how Christianity would have been different – and, in Mill's opinion, how much it would have been

better – had it developed during the reign of Marcus Aurelius. I narrowed the scope of Mill's reflection by focusing on whether or not the chi-rho and tau-rho would have developed as the same sort of symbols under any other emperor as they did under Constantine. Throughout the course of this dissertation, I have demonstrated that Constantine was an integral influence over the use and popularity of the chi-rho, which continued to affect how the symbol was deployed throughout the fourth century. Even if another emperor had become the first Christian emperor of the Roman Empire, the chi-rho would not have flourished as it did under Constantine. It would not have been placed on the imperial standard and it would not have become a talismanic Christian symbol that is still used by the Church today. It likely would have remained in relative obscurity as a non-religious scribal device or – if it were taken up as a symbol for the word Χριστός – it would not have reached the masses that it did under Constantine. The tau-rho, on the other hand, had already been fully realized as a Christian symbol by the time Constantine converted. Even if Constantine had not adopted it, by the time the Empire had embraced Christianity, it likely would have continued to be a Christian symbol. Nevertheless, the tau-rho might not have enjoyed the popularity that it did under the Theodosians were it not for Constantine's application of the chi-rho as his talisman. For these reasons, were it not for Constantine and his 'Constantinian' monogram – the saving sign bestowed upon him from God – this dissertation would not exist.

Bibliography

A. Database Sources

A.1 *L'Année Épigraphique*

AE 1889 — Cagnat, R. 1890. *L'Année Épigraphique 1889.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1901 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1902. *L'Année Épigraphique 1901.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1902 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1903. *L'Année Épigraphique 1902.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1905 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1906. *L'Année Épigraphique 1905.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1906 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1907. *L'Année Épigraphique 1906.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1908 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1909. *L'Année Épigraphique 1908.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1912 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1913. *L'Année Épigraphique 1912.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1913 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1914. *L'Année Épigraphique 1913.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1914 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1915. *L'Année Épigraphique 1914.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1929 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1930. *L'Année Épigraphique 1929.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1931 — Cagnat, R., and M. Besnier. 1932. *L'Année Épigraphique 1931.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1938 — Merlin, A., and J. Gagé. 1939. *L'Année Épigraphique 1938.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1940 — Merlin, A., and J. Gagé. 1941. *L'Année Épigraphique 1940.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1979 — Chastagnol, A., J. Gagé, and M. Leglay. 1982. *L'Année Épigraphique 1979.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1982 — Chastagnol, A., M. Leglay, and P. Le Roux. 1984. *L'Année Épigraphique 1982.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1985 — Chastagnol, A., M. Leglay, and P. Le Roux. 1988. *L'Année Épigraphique 1985.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1989 — Chastagnol, A., A. Laronde, M. Leglay, and P. Le Roux. 1992. *L'Année Épigraphique 1989.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1990 — Chastagnol, A., A. Laronde, M. Leglay, and P. Le Roux. 1993. *L'Année Épigraphique 1990.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1992 — Corbier, M., and P. Le Roux. 1995. *L'Année Épigraphique 1992.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1994 — Corbier, M., P. Le Roux, and S. Dardaine. 1997. *L'Année Épigraphique 1994.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1997 — Corbier, M., P. Le Roux, and S. Dardaine. 2000. *L'Année Épigraphique 1997.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 1998 — Corbier, M., P. Le Roux, and S. Dardaine. 2001. *L'Année Épigraphique 1998.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 2000 — Corbier, M., P. Le Roux, S. Dardaine, M. Cullin, and I. Fauduet. 2003. *L'Année Épigraphique 2000.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 2002 — Corbier, M., P. Le Roux, S. Dardaine, R. Chossenot, and I. Fauduet. 2005. *L'Année Épigraphique 2002.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 2004 — Corbier, M., P. Le Roux, S. Dardaine, I. Fauduet, and M. Popescu. 2007. *L'Année Épigraphique 2004.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 2005 — Corbier, M., P. Le Roux, S. Dardaine, I. Fauduet, and M. Popescu. 2008. *L'Année Épigraphique 2005.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

AE 2006 — Corbier, M., P. Le Roux, S. Dardaine, I. Fauduet, and M. Popescu. 2009. *L'Année Épigraphique 2006.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

A.2 *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*

CIL II — Hübner, E. W. E., ed. 1869. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 2, *Inscriptiones Hispaniae Latinae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum

CIL II Suppl. — Hübner, E. W. E., ed. 1892. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 2, Suppl., *Inscriptiones Hispaniae Latinae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum

CIL II^2 Pars V — Stylow, A. U., *et al*., eds. 1998. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 2/Pars V, *Conventus Astigitanus.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

CIL II^2 Pars VII — Stylow, A. U., ed. 1995. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 2/Pars VII, *Conventus Cordubensis.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

CIL II^2 Pars XIV, Fasc. I — Alföldy, G., *et al.*, eds. 1995. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 2/Pars XIV, Fasc. I, *Conventus Tarraconensis: Pars Meridionalis Conventus Tarraconensis.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

CIL II^2 Pars XIV, Fasc. II — Alföldy, G., ed. 2011. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 2/Pars XIV, Fasc. II, *Conventus Tarraconensis: Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

CIL II^2 Pars XIV, Fasc. III — Alföldy, G., ed. 2012. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 2/Pars XIV, Fasc. III, *Conventus Tarraconensis: Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

CIL II^2 Pars XIV, Fasc. IV — Alföldy, G., and H. Niquet, eds. 2016. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 2/Pars XIV, Fasc. IV, *Conventus Tarraconensis: Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

CIL III Pars I — Mommsen, T., ed. 1873. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 3/Pars I, *Inscriptiones Asiae, Provinciarum Europae Graecarum, Illyrici Latinae: Inscriptiones Aegypti et Asiae. Inscriptiones Provinciarum Europae Graecarum. Inscriptionum Illyrici Partes I-V.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL III Pars II — Mommsen, T., ed. 1873. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 3/Pars II, *Inscriptiones Asiae, Provinciarum Europae Graecarum, Illyrici Latinae: Inscriptionum Illyrici Partes VI. VII. Res Gestae Divi Augusti. Edictum Diocletiani de Pretiis Rerum. Privilegia Militum Veteranorumque. Instrumenta Dacica.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL III Suppl. Pars I — Mommsen, T., O. Hirschfeld, and A. Domaszewski, eds. 1902. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 3/Suppl. Pars I, Fasc. I-III, *Inscriptiones Asiae, Provinciarum Europae Graecarum, Illyrici Latinae: Supplementum. Inscriptionum Orientis et Illyrici Latinarum Supplementum.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL III Suppl. Pars II — Mommsen, T., O. Hirschfeld, and A. Domaszewski, eds. 1902. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 3/Suppl. Pars I, Fasc. IV-V, *Inscriptiones Asiae, Provinciarum Europae Graecarum, Illyrici Latinae: Supplementum. Inscriptionum Orientis et Illyrici Latinarum Supplementum.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL V, Pars I — Mommsen, T., ed. 1872. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 5/Pars I, *Inscriptiones Galliae Cisalpinae Latinae: Inscriptiones Regionis Italiae Decimae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL V, Pars II — Mommsen, T., ed. 1877. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 5/Pars I, *Inscriptiones Galliae Cisalpinae Latinae: Inscriptiones Regionis Italiae Undecimae et Nonae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VI, Pars I — Bormann, E., and G. Henzen, eds. 1876. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 6/Pars I, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae: Inscriptiones Sacrae. Augustorum, Magistratuum, Sacerdotum. Latercula et Tituli Militum.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VI, Pars II — Bormann, E., G. Henzen, and C. Huelsen, eds. 1882. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 6/Pars II, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae: Monumenta Columbariorum. Tituli Officialium et Artificium. Tituli Sepulcrales Reliqui: A-Claudius.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VI, Pars III — Bormann, E., G. Henzen, and C. Huelsen, eds. 1886. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 6/Pars III, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae: Tituli Sepulcrales: Claudius-Plotius.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VI, Pars IV, Fasc. I — Huelsen, C., ed. 1894. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 6/Pars IV, Fasc. I, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae: Tituli Sepulcrales: Plotius-Zozon. Inscriptiones Varii Argumenti. Fragmenta.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VI, Pars IV, Fasc. II — Huelsen, C., ed. 1902. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 6/Pars IV, Fasc. II, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae: Additamenta.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VI, Pars IV, Fasc. III — Bang, M., ed. 1933. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 6/Pars IV, Fasc. III, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae: Additamentorum Auctarium.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

CIL VII — Hübner, E. W. E., ed. 1873. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 7, *Inscriptiones Britanniae Latinae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VIII, Pars I — Wilmanns, G., ed. 1881. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 8/Pars I, *Inscriptiones Africae Proconsularis et Numidiae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VIII, Pars II — Wilmanns, G., ed. 1881. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 8/Pars II, *Inscriptiones Mauretaniarum.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VIII Suppl. Pars I — Cagnat, R., and I. Schmidt, eds. 1891. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 8/Suppl. Pars I, *Inscriptiones Africae Proconsularis.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VIII Suppl. Pars II — Cagnat, R., and I. Schmidt, eds. 1894. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 8/Suppl. Pars II, *Inscriptiones Provinciae Numidiae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VIII Suppl. Pars III — Schmidt, I., R. Cagnat, and H. Dessau, eds. 1904. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 8/Suppl. Pars III, *Inscriptiones Mauretaniae. Miliaria et Instrumentum Domesticum.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL VIII Suppl. Pars IV — Cagnat, R. and H. Dessau, eds. 1916. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 8/Suppl. Pars IV, *Inscriptiones Africae Proconsularis.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL IX — Mommsen, T., ed. 1883. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 9, *Inscriptiones Calabriae, Apuliae, Samnii, Sabinorum, Piceni Latinae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL X, Pars I — Mommsen, T., ed. 1883. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 10/Pars I, *Inscriptiones Bruttiorum, Lucaniae, Campaniae, Siciliae, Sardiniae Latinae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL X, Pars II — Mommsen, T., ed. 1883. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 10/Pars II, *Inscriptiones Bruttiorum, Lucaniae, Campaniae, Siciliae, Sardiniae Latinae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XI, Pars I — Bormann, E., ed. 1888. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 11/Pars I, *Inscriptiones Aemiliae et Etruriae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XI, Pars II, Fasc. I — Bormann, E., ed. 1901. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 11/Pars II, Fasc. I, *Inscriptiones Umbriae, Viarum Publicarum, Instrumenti Domestici.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XI, Pars II, Fasc. II — Bormann, E., ed. 1926. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 11/Pars II, Fasc. II, *Addenda ad Partes Priores et Indicum Capita Tria.* Berlin: De Gruyter et Socios.

CIL XII — Hirschfeld, O., ed. 1888. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 12, *Inscriptiones Galliae Narbonensis Latinae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XIII, Pars I, Fasc. I — Hirschfeld, O., ed. 1899. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 13/Pars I, Fasc. I, *Inscriptiones Trium Galliarum et Germaniarum Latinae: Inscriptiones Aquitaniae et Lugudunensis.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XIII, Pars I, Fasc. II — Hirschfeld, O., ed. 1904. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 13/Pars I, Fasc. II, *Inscriptiones Trium Galliarum et Germaniarum Latinae: Inscriptiones Belgicae.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XIII, Pars II, Fasc. I — Zangemeister, C., ed. 1905. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 13/Pars II, Fasc. I, *Inscriptiones Trium Galliarum et Germaniarum Latinae: Inscriptiones Germaniae Superioris.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XIII, Pars II, Fasc. II — Mommsen, T., O. Hirschfeld, and A. Domaszewski, eds. 1907. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 13/Pars II, Fasc. II, *Inscriptiones Trium Galliarum et Germaniarum Latinae: Inscriptiones Germaniae Inferioris. Miliaria Galliarum et Germaniarum.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XIII, Pars III, Fasc. I — Bohn, O., ed. 1901. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 13/Pars III, Fasc. I, *Inscriptiones Trium Galliarum et Germaniarum Latinae: Instrumentum Domesticum I.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XIII, Pars III, Fasc. II — Bohn, O., ed. 1906. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 13/Pars III, Fasc. II, *Inscriptiones Trium Galliarum et Germaniarum Latinae: Instrumentum Domesticum II.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

CIL XIII, Pars IV — Hirschfeld, O., and H. Finke, eds. 1916. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.* Vol. 13/Pars IV, *Inscriptiones Trium Galliarum et Germaniarum Latinae: Addenda ad Partes Primam et Secundam.* Berlin: G. Reimerum.

A.3 *Inscriptiones Christianae Graecae*

ICG 1031 — Breytenbach, C., et al., eds. n.d. *Inscriptiones Christianae Graecae (ICG): A Digital Collection of Greek Early Christian Inscriptions from Asia Minor and Greece.* http://www.epigraph.topoi.org.

A.4 *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*

ICUR — de Rossi, G. B., A. Silvagni, and A. Ferrua, eds. 1922-1992. *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae, nova series*. 10 vols. Rome: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana.

A.5 *Inscriptiones Graecae Christianae Veteres Occidentis*

IGCVO — Wessel, C., ed. 1989. *Inscriptiones Graecae Christianae Veteres Occidentis*. Inscriptiones Christianae Italiae Subsidia 1. Bari, Italy: Edipuglia.

A.6 *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres*

ILCV — Diehl, E., ed. 1970 (reprint). *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres.* 4 vols. Berlin: Weidmann.

A.7 *Roman Inscriptions of Britain*

RIB II — Collingwood, R. G., and R. P. Wright, eds. *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain*. Vol. 2, *Instrumentum Domesticum*, fasc. 1-8. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

A.8 *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*

ILS — Dessau, H., ed. 1892 – 1916. *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae.* 3 vols. Berlin: Weidmann.

A.9 *Online Coins of the Roman Empire*

OCRE — American Numismatic Society and the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World. n.d. *Online Coins of the Roman Empire (OCRE)*. http://numismatics.org/ocre/

A.10 *Roman Imperial Coinage*

RIC I — Mattingly, H. and E. A. Sydenham. 1923. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 1, *Augustus to Vitellius*. London: Spink.

RIC II — Mattingly, H. and E. A. Sydenham. 1926. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 2, *Vespasian to Hadrian*. London: Spink.

RIC III — Mattingly, H. and E. A. Sydenham. 1930. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 3, *Antoninus Pius to Commodus*. London: Spink.

RIC IVa — Mattingly, H. and E. A. Sydenham. 1936. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 4, Pt. 1, *Pertinax to Geta*. London: Spink.

RIC IVb — Mattingly, H., E. A. Sydenham and C. H. V. Sutherland. 1938. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 4, Pt. 2, *Macrinus to Pupienus*. London: Spink.

RIC IVc — Mattingly, H., E. A. Sydenham and C. H. V. Sutherland. 1949. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 4, Pt. 3, *Gordian III to Uranius Antoninus*. London: Spink.

RIC Va — Webb, P. H. 1927. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 5, Pt. 1, *Valerian to Florian*. London: Spink.

RIC Vb — Webb, P. H. 1933. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 5, Pt. 2, *Probus to Amandus*. London: Spink.

RIC VI — Sutherland, C. H. V. 1967. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 6, *From Diocletian's Reform (A.D.294) to the Death of Maximinus (A.D.313)*. London: Spink.

RIC VII — Bruun, P. M. 1966. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 7, *Constantine and Licinius A.D. 313-337*. London: Spink.

RIC VIII — Kent, J. P. C. 1981. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 8, *The Family of Constantine I, A.D. 337-364*. London: Spink.

RIC IX — Pearce, J. W. E. 1951. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 9, *Valentinian I - Theodosius I*. London: Spink.

RIC X — Kent, J. P. C. 1994. *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. Vol. 10, *The Divided Empire and the Fall of the Western Parts, A.D. 395-491*. London: Spink.

A.11 *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*

SEG 6 — Hondius, J. J. E., ed. 1932. *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Vol. 6. Leiden: Brill. http://dx.doi.org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1163/1874-6772_seg_a6_210.

SEG 18 — Woodhead, A. G., ed. 1962. *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Vol. 18. Leiden: Brill. http://dx.doi.org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1163/1874-6772_seg_a18_425.

SEG 29 — Pleket, H. W., and R. S. Stroud, eds. 1982. *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Vol. 29. Leiden: Brill. http://dx.doi.org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1163/1874-6772_seg_a29_1400.

SEG 37 — Pleket, H. W., and R. S. Stroud, eds. 1990. *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Vol. 37. Leiden: Brill. http://dx.doi.org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1163/1874-6772_seg_a37_808.

Chaniotis, A., H. W. Pleket, R. S. Stroud, and J. H. M. Strubbe, eds. 1998. *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Vol. 45. Leiden: Brill. http://dx.doi.org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1163/1874-6772_seg_a45_1743.

B. Primary Sources

Amm. Marc. — Ammianus Marcellinus

Rolfe, J. C., ed. and trans. 1940. *Ammianus Marcellinus with an English Translation, Vol. II: Books 20-26*. Loeb Classical Library 315. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Arist. *De Int.* — Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*

Cooke, H. P., and H. Tredennick, ed. and trans. 1938. *Aristotle: De Interpretatione.* Loeb Classical Library 325. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

August. *De Doc. Chris.* — Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*

Green, R. P. H., ed. and trans. 1995. *Augustine: De Doctrina Christiana*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Cod. Theod. — *Codex Theodosianus*

Mommsen, T., P. M. Meyer, and J. Sirmond, eds. 1905. *Theodosiani Libri XVI cum Constitutionibus Sirmondianis et Leges Novellae ad Theodosianum Pertinentes: Consilio et Auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Borussicae.* 2 vols. Berlin: Weidmann.

Pharr, C., T. S. Davidson, and M. B. Pharr, eds. and trans. 1952. *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions.* Corpus of Roman Law 1. Princeton, PA: Princeton University Press.

Euseb. *De Laud. Const.* — Eusebius, *De Laudibus Constantini*

Drake, H. A., ed. and trans. 1976. *Eusebius: In Praise of Constantine: A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius' Tricennial Orations.* Classical Studies 15. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* — Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*

Lake, K., ed. and trans. 1926. *Eusebius: Ecclesiastical History, Vol. I: Books 1-5.* Loeb Classical Library 153. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Euseb. *Vit. Const.* Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*

Winklemann, F., ed. 1975. *Eusebius: Vita Constantini.* Die Grieschischen Christlichen Schriftsteller 7. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.

Cameron, A., and S. G. Hall, eds. and trans. 1999. *Eusebius: Life of Constantine*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Ign. *Ep. ad Hero.* Ignatius, *Epistula ad Heronem*

Ehrman, E. D., ed. and trans. 2003. "Ignatius: Letters of Ignatius." In *The Apostolic Fathers, Vol. I.* Loeb Classical Library 24. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 203-323.

Jer. *Chron.* Jerome, *Chronica*

Pearce, R., ed. and trans. 2005. *The Chronicle of St. Jerome.* The Tertullian Project Online. https://www.tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_chronicle_00_eintro.htm

Jer. *De Vir. Ill.* Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*

Richardson, E. C., ed. 1896. *Jerome: Hieronymus Liber De Viris Inlustribus; Gennadius Liber De Viris Inlustribus*. Leipzig, Germany: J .C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.

Halton, T. P., ed. and trans. 1999. *Jerome: On Illustrious Men*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press.

Jul. *Caes.* Julian, *Caesars*

Wright, W. C., ed and trans. 1913. "Caesars." In *The Works of the Emperor Julian, Vol. II.* Loeb Classical Library 29. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 341-416.

Jul. *Mis.* Julian, *Misopogon*

Wright, W. C., ed. and trans. 1913. "Misopogon, or, Beard-Hater." In *The Works of the Emperor Julian, Vol. II.* Loeb Classical Library 29. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 417-512.

Jul. *Or.* — Julian, *Orationes*

Tantillo, I., ed. and trans. 1997. *La prima orazione di Giuliano a Costanzo: introduzione, traduzione e commento*. 10th ed. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.

Justin, *Apol.* — Justin Martyr, *Apologia*

Blunt, A. W. F., ed. and trans. 1911. *The Apologies of Justin Martyr.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Roberts, A., and J. Donaldson. 1913. "Justin Martyr: The First Apology." In *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325.* New York, NY: C. Scribner's Sons.

Lactant. *De Mort. Pers.* — Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*

Creed, J. L., ed. and trans. 1984. *Lactantius: De Mortibus Persecutorum*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

McDonald, M. F., ed. and trans. 1965. *Lactantius: The Minor Works.* The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 54. Washington: DC: Catholic University of America Press.

Moreau, J., ed. and trans. 1954. Lactance: *De la Mort des Persécuteurs. I. Introduction, texte critique et traduction* (2 volumes ed.). Paris: Éditions de Cerf.

Roberts, A., J. Donaldson, and A. C. Coxe, eds. 1886. *Lactantius: De Mortibus Persecutorum (On the Manner in which the Persecutors Died).* The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325, Vol. 7. Translated by W. Fletcher. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Städele, A. 2003. *Laktans: De Mortibus Persecutorum, Die Todesarten der Verfolger.* Frontes Christiani, 43. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols.

Lactant. *Div. Inst.* — Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones*

Bowen, A., and P. Garnsey, eds. and trans. 2003. *Lactantius: Divine Institutes. Translated with an Introduction and Notes.* Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press.

NT *New Testament*

Clontz, T. E., ed. and trans. 2006. "The Letter of Paul to the Colossians." In *Common Edition: New Testament.* Oxford: MS: Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.

Opt. *Carm.* Optatian, *Carmina*

Polara, I., ed. 1973. *Publilii Optatiani Porfyrii Carmina. I. Textus adiecto Indice Verborum*. Torino: G. B. Paravia.

Ori. *Eze.* Origen, *Selecta in Ezechielem*

Migne, J. P., ed. 1857. "Origen: *Selecta in Ezechielem*." In *Patrologia Graeca, Vol. 13*. Paris: J. P. Migne, 767-824.

Pan. Lat. *XII Panegyrici Latini*

Nixon, C. E. V., and B. S. Rodgers, eds. and trans. 1994. "Nazarius: Panegyric of Constantine." In *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors: the Panegyrici Latini: Introduction, Translation, and Historical Commentary, with the Latin Text of R. A. B. Mynors.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 334-385.

Prudent. *C. Symm.* Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*

Hartman, J. J. 2016. "Allusion and Cultural Memory in Late Antiquity: Ausonius, Prudentius, and Claudian." Ph.D. diss., University of Washington.

Thomson, H. J., ed. and trans. 1949. *Prudentius*. Loeb Classical Library 387. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*

Hussey, R., ed. 1853. *Σωκρατους Σχολαστικου Ἐκκλησιαστικη Ἱστορια. Socratis Scholastici Ecclesiastica Historia*. Oxford: Academic Press.

Schaff, P., and H. Wallace, ed. 1890. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Socrates, Sozomenus: Church Histories*. Translated by A. C. Zenos. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co.

Sib. Or. — *Sibylline Oracles*

Anon. 1862. "Art. II: The Sibylline Oracles," in *The Christian Remembrancer,* Vol. 42. London: J. and C. Mozley.

Gauger, J.-D. 2002. *Sibyllinische Weissagungen. Griechisch-deutsch.* 2nd ed. *Tusculum.* Düsseldorf: Artemis & Winkler.

Milton, T. S., trans. 1899. *The Sibylline Oracles: Translated from the Greek into English Blank Verse.* New York, NY: Eaton & Mains.

Suet. *Claud.* — Suetonius, *Divus Claudius*

Bradley, K. R., ed. 1914. "Claudius." In *Suetonius: Lives of the Caesars*. Translated by J. C. Rolfe. Loeb Classical Library 31. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Tert. *Ad Nat.* — Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*

Borleffs, J. W. P., ed. 1929. *Tertullian: Ad Nationes Libri Duo.* Leiden: Brill.

Howe, Q., ed. and trans. 2007. *Tertullian: Ad Nationes, I.* The Tertullian Project. Retrieved from: https://www.tertullian.org/articles/howe_adnationes1.htm

Tert. *Adv. Marc.* — Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*

Evans, E., ed. and trans. 1972. *Tertullianus: Adversus Marcionem,* 2 vols. Oxford Early Christian Texts. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Tert. *Apol.* — Tertullian, *Apologeticus*

Glover, T. R., and G. H. Rendall, eds. and trans. 1931. *Tertullian: Apology.* Loeb Classical Library 250. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Thuc. — Thucydides

Smith, C. F., ed and trans. 1919. *History of the Peloponnesian War.* Loeb Classical Library 108. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

C. Secondary Sources

Aland, B., K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger, eds. 2006. *The Greek New Testament.* 4th rev. ed. Edmonds, WA: Hendrickson.

Aland, K. 1963. "Neue Neutestamentliche Papyri II." *New Testament Studies* 10(1):62-79.

Aland, K. 1967. *Studien zur Überlieferung des Neuen Testaments und seines Textes*. Berlin: Gruyter.

Alföldi, A. 1932. "The Helmet of Constantine with the Christian Monogram." *JRS* 22:9-23.

Alföldi, A. 1948. *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome.* Translated by H. Mattingly. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Alföldi, M. R. 1978. *Antike Numismatik.* Mainz, Germany: von Zabern.

Allason-Jones, L., ed. 2011. *Artefacts in Roman Britain: Their Purpose and Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

American Numismatic Society (ANS). 2022. *Explore the ANS Numismatic Collections.* https://numismatics.org/collections/.

Ando, C. 2000. *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ariel, D. T., and J. Fontanille. 2012. *The Coins of Herod*. Leiden: Brill.

Armstrong, J. J. 2014. "Reevaluating Constantine's Legacy in Trinitarian Orthodoxy: New Evidence from Eusebius of Caesarea's Commentary on Isaiah." In *Rethinking Constantine: History, Theology and Legacy*, edited by E. L. Smither. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 91-104.

Avi-Yonah, M. 1974. "Abbreviations in Greek Inscriptions: The Near East, 200 B.C.-A.D. 1100." In *A Manual of Abbreviations in Greek Inscriptions: Papyri, Manuscripts, and Early Printed Books,* edited by A. N. Oikonomides. Chicago: Ares Publishers, 1-125.

Baird, J. A. 2006. "Housing and Households at Dura-Europos: A Study in Identity on Rome's Eastern Frontier." Volume I. Ph.D. diss., University of Leicester.

Baird, J. A. 2012. "*Dura Deserta:* The Death and Afterlife of Dura-Europos." In *Vrbes Extinctae: Archaeologies of Abandoned Classical Towns,* edited by N. Christie and A. Augenti. Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 307-330.

Baird, J. A. 2018. *Dura-Europos.* London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Baird, J. A. 2020. ‘The Ruination of Dura-Europos.” *Theoretical Roman Archaeology Journal* 3(1):1-20.

Bal, M., and N. Bryson. 1991. “Semiotics and Art History.” *ArtB* 73(2):174-208.

Barasch, M. 1997. *The Language of Art: Studies in Interpretation*. New York: New York University Press.

Bardill, J. 2012. *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bardon, H. 1975. “Review of *Publilii Optatiani Porfyrii Carmina*, by G. Polara.” *RBPhil* 53(2):453.

Barnes, T. D. 1973. “Lactantius and Constantine.” *JRS* 63:29-46.

Barnes, T. D. 1975. “Publilius Optatianus Porfyrius.” *AJP* 96(2):173-186.

Barnes, T. D. 1976. “The Historical Setting of Prudentius' Contra Symmachum.” *AJP* 97(4):373-386.

Barnes, T. D. 1981. *Constantine and Eusebius*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Barnes, T. D. 1989. “Panegyric, History and Hagiography in Eusebius' Life of Constantine.” In *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick,* edited by R. Williams. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 94-123.

Barnes, T. D. 1993. *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Barnes, T. D. 2014. *Constantine: Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire*. Chichester, England: Wiley-Blackwell.

Barrett-Lennard, R. J. S. 1994. *Christian Healing After the New Testament: Some Approaches to Illness in the Second, Third and Fourth Centuries*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America.

Bartlett, J. 1985. *Jews in the Hellenistic World: Josephus, Aristeas, The Sibylline Oracles, Eupolemus.* Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish and Christian World, Vol. 1. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Barton, T. 1995. “Augustus and Capricorn: Astrological Polyvalency and Imperial Rhetoric.” *JRS* 85:33-51.

Bauer, S. W. 2010. *The History of the Medieval World: From the Conversion of Constantine to the First Crusade.* New York: W.W. Norton.

Beckwith, J. 1970. *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*. 2nd ed. New York: Penguin Books.

Bendlin, A., and H. A. Shapiro. "Personification." In *Brill's New Pauly Online,* edited by H. Cancik and H. Schneider. English Edition by C. F. Salazar. Accessed September 12, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e915780.

Birley, E. B. 1958. "A 4th-entury Milestone from Old Penrith." *Transactions of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society* 58(2):88-93.

Bitton-Ashkelony, B. 2005. *Encountering the Sacred: The Debate on Christian Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Black, M. 1970. "The Chi-Rho Sign - Christogram and/or Tau-Rho?" In *Apostolic History and the Gospel. Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F. F. Bruce on his 60th Birthday,* edited by W. W. Gasque and R. P. Martin. Exeter, Devon: The Paternoster Press, 319-327.

Blumell, L. H. 2010. "Is P.Oxy. XLII 3057 the Earliest Christian Letter?" In *Early Christian Manuscripts: Examples of Applied Method and Approach*, edited by T. Nicklas and T. J. Kraus. Leiden: Brill, 97-113.

Blumell, L. H. 2012. *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus*. Leiden: Brill.

Boddens Hosang, F. J. E. 2010. *Establishing Boundaries: Christian-Jewish Relations in Early Council Texts and the Writings of Church Fathers*. Leiden: Brill.

Boeft, J. D. 2008. *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXVI*. Leiden: Brill.

Boin, D. 2013. *Ostia in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Borg, B. 2013. *Crisis and Ambition: Tombs and Burial Customs in Third-Century CE Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bowen, A., and P. Garnsey, eds. and trans. 2003. *Lactantius: Divine Institutes. Translated with an Introduction and Notes.* Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press.

Brands, G. 2018. "Preservations, Historicization, Change: Antioch A.D. 350-450." In *Antioch II: The Many Faces of Antioch: Intellectual Exchange and Religious Diversity, CE 350-450*, edited by S. Elm and S. Bergjan. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 13-33.

Brent, A. 2009. *A Political History of Early Christianity*. London: T & T Clark.

Breytenbach, C., and C. Zimmermann. 2017. *Early Christianity in Lycaonia and Adjacent Areas: from Paul to Amphilochius of Iconium*. Leiden: Brill.

Brown, K. R. 1979. "Lamp with griffin head (560 and 561)." In *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century: Catalogue of the Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, November 19, 1977, through February 12, 1978*, edited by K. Weitzmann. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 624-625.

Brown, P. 2012. *Through the Eye of a Needle*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Brown, S. 1970. "Concerning the Origin of the Nomina Sacra." *StPap* 9:7-19.

Browning, R. 1982. "Poetry." In *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature: The Later Principate,* edited by E. J. Kenney. 5th ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 10-40.

Bruun, P. 1962. "The Christian Signs on the Coins of Constantine." *Arctos* 3:5-35.

Bruun, P. 1963. "Symboles, signes et monogrammes." In *Sylloge Inscriptionum Christianarum Veterum Musei Vaticani*, edited by H Zilliacus. Helsinki: Akateeminen Krjakauppa, 73-166.

Bruun, P. 1997. "The Victorious Signs of Constantine: A Reappraisal." *NC* 157:41-59.

Buckler, W. H., W. M. Calder, and C. W. M. Cox. 1926. "Asia Minor, 1924: III. Monuments from Central Phrygia." *JRS* 16:53-94.

Buitenwerf, R. 2003. *Book III of the Sibylline Oracles and its Social Setting: with an Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*. Leiden: Brill.

Burgeon, C. 2019. "La vision et le songe de Constantin ayant précédé la bataille du pont Milvius dans les oeuvres d'Eusèbe de Césarée et de Lactance." *Folia Electronica Classica* 37:1-15.

Butcher, K. 2012. "Syria in the Roman Period, 64 BC – AD 260." In *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Coinage,* edited by W. E. Metcalf. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 468-484.

Cabrol, F., and H. Leclercq. 1913. *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*. 2nd ed. Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané.

Cameron, A. 1993. *The Later Roman Empire, AD 284-430*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cameron, A. 2011. *The Last Pagans of Rome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cameron, A., and S. G. Hall, eds. and trans. 1999. *Eusebius: Life of Constantine*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Carder, J. N. 1979. "Statuette of St. Peter." In *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century: Catalogue of the Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, November 19, 1977, through February 12, 1978*, edited by K. Weitzmann. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 571-572.

Carroll, M. 2006. *Spirits of the Dead*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cecchelli, C. 1944. *Monumenti cristiano-eretici di Roma.* Rome: Fratelli Palombi.

Centre for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts. 2001. *Digital Collection*. https://manuscripts.csntm.org/.

Chandler, D. 2002. *Semiotics: The Basics*. London: Routledge.

Chastagnol, A. 2008. *Le pouvoir imperial à Rome. Figures et commémorations. Scripta varia IV.* Edited by S. Benoist and S. Demougin. Massot, Genève: Librairie Droz.

Choat, M. 2006. *Belief and Cult in Fourth-Century Papyri*. Studia Antiqua Australiensia, I. Turnhout: Brepols.

Claridge, A. 2010. *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide.* 2nd rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Clausen, W. V. 2002. *Virgil's Aeneid: Decorum, Allusion, and Ideology.* Munich, Germany: K. G. Saur.

Clauss, M., A. Kolb, W. A. Slaby, and B. Woitas. n.d. *Epigraphik-Batenbank Clauss/Slaby*. https://db.edcs.eu/epigr/.

Cline, R. 2011. *Ancient Angels: Conceptualizing Angeloi in the Roman Empire.* Leiden: Brill.

Coleman, C. B. 1968. Reprint. *Constantine the Great and Christianity: Three Phases: The Historical, the Legendary, and the Spurious*. New York: AMS Press. Original edition, New York: Columbia University Press, 1914.

Collins, J. J. 2001. *Seers, Sibyls, and Sages in Hellenistic-Roman Judaism.* Boston: Brill Academic.

Conant, J. P. 2020. "Memories of Trauma and the Formation of a Christian Identity." In *Memories of Utopia: The Revision of Histories and Landscapes in Late Antiquity*, edited by B. Neil and K. Simic. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 36-56.

Connor, C. L. 2016. *Saints and Spectacle: Byzantine Mosaics in Their Cultural Setting.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cook, A. B. 1908. "The Cretan Axe-Cult outside Crete." *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions, Vol. II.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 184-194.

Cook, J. G. 2018. *Empty Tomb, Resurrection, Apotheosis*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

Cooke, G. A. 2015. *Ezekiel*. London: Bloomsbury.

Cooley, A. E. 2012. *The Cambridge Manual of Latin Epigraphy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Conant, J. 2012. *Staying Roman: Conquest and Identity in Africa and the Mediterranean, 439-700.* Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th ser., 82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Corn, A. 2011. "Shakespeare's Epitaph." *The Hudson Review* 64(2):295-303.

Costambeys, M. 2001. "Burial Topography and the Power of the Church in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Rome." *PBSR* 69:169-189.

Coulston, J. C. N. 2013. "Late Roman Military Equipment Culture." In *War and Warfare In Late Antiquity,* edited by N. Christie and A. C. Sarantis. Leiden: Brill, 463-492.

Couzin, R. 2015. *The Traditio Legis: Anatomy of an Image*. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Creed, J. L., ed. and trans. 1984. *Lactantius: De Mortibus Persecutorum*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Crerar, B. 2006. "Votive Leaves from Roman Britain." In *Roman Art, Religion and Society: New Studies from the Roman Art Seminar, Oxford 2005*, edited by M. Henig. Oxford: Archaeopress, 71-89.

Crerar, B. 2012. "Contextualising Romano-British Lead Tanks: A Study in Design, Destruction and Deposition." *Britannia* 43:135-166.

Cumont, F. 1942. *Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains.* Paris: P. Geuthner.

Curchin, L. A. 2014. "The Role of Civic Leaders in Late Antique Hispania." *Studia Historica: Historia Antigua* 32:281-304.

Davies, P. J. E. 2000. *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments, from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius.* Austin: University of Texas Press.

De Bruyn, T. 2017. *Making Amulets Christian: Artefacts, Scribes, and Contexts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

De Cuypere, L., and K. Willems. 2008. "Meaning and Reference in Aristotle's Concept of the Linguistic Sign." *Foundations of Science* 13(3-4):307-324.

de Rossi, G. B. 1874. "Bulletino di archeologia Cristiana." *The Month and Catholic Review, XXII* 3(September - December):502-503.

de Rossi, G. B. 1888-1889. "L'ipogeo degli Acilii Glabrioni nel cimitero di Priscilla." *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana* 4.6:15-66.

de Saussure, F. 2011. *Course in General Linguistics.* Edited by P. Meisel and H. Saussy. Translated by W. Baskin. New York: Columbia University Press.

De Savignac, J. 1963. "Les papyrus Bodmer XIV et XV." *Scriptorium* 17(1):50-55.

Demaeght, L. 1895. *Catalogue raisonné des objets archéologiques contenus dans le musée d'Oran, avec une carte de la partie de la maurétanie césarienne correspondant à la province d'Oran*. Oran, Algeria: Imprimerie Typographie et Lithographie L. Fouque.

Denzey Lewis, N. 2020. *The Early Modern Invention of Late Antique Rome.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Derks, T. 2011. "Town-Country Dynamics in Roman Gaul. The Epigraphy of the Ruling Elite." In *Villa Landscapes in the Roman North: Economy, Culture and Lifestyles*, edited by N. Roymans and T. Derks. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 107-138.

Derrida, J. 1972. *Positions*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit.

De Ste. Croix, G. E. M. 2006. "Aspects of the Great Persecution." In *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy,* edited by M. Whitby and J. Streeter. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dinkler, E. 1951. "Zur Geschichte des Kreuzsymbols." *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 48(2):148-172.

Dodgeon, M. H., and S. N. C Lieu. 1991. *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars (AD 226-363): A Documentary History*. London: Routledge.

Doig, A. 2008. *Liturgy and Architecture from the Early Church to the Middle Ages*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

Dölger, F. J. 1928. *Das Fisch-Symbol in Frühchristlicher Zeit: IXΘYC als Kürzung der Namen Jesu IHCOYC XPICTOC ΘEOY YIOC CΩTHP*. Münster: Aschendorff.

Donfried, K. P., and P. Richardson. 1998. *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans.

Doyle, C. 2015. "Declaring Victory, Concealing Defeat? Continuity and Change in Imperial Coinage of the Roman West, c. 383- c. 408." In *Shifting Genres in Late Antiquity*, edited by G. Greatrex and H. Elton. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 157-172.

Doyle, C. 2019. *Honorius: The Fight for the Roman West AD 395-423*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Drake, H. A., ed. and trans. 1976. *Eusebius: In Praise of Constantine: A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius' Tricennial Orations.* Classical Studies 15. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Drake, H. A. 1988. "What Eusebius Knew: The Genesis of the 'Vita Constantini'" *CP* 83(1):20-38.

Drake, H. A. 2000. *Constantine and the Bishops: The Politics of Intolerance*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Drake, H. A. 2009. "Solar Power in Late Antiquity." In *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity*, edited by A. Cain and N. E. Lenski. Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 215-226.

Drake, H. A. 2017. "Constantine and Religious Extremism." In *Constantine: Religious Faith and Imperial Policy*, edited by A. E. Siecienski. London: Routledge, 12-26.

Driver, G. R. 1954. *Semitic Writing: From Pictograph to Alphabet.* Rev ed. London: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press.

Dulaey, M. 1983. "Le chandelier à sept branches dans le christianisme ancien." *Revue d'études augustiniennes et patristiques* 29:3-26.

Duval, Y. 1982. *Loca sanctorum Africae: le culte des martyrs en Afrique du IVe au VIIe siècle*. Rome: École Française de Rome.

Eadie, J. W. 1971. *The Conversion of Constantine*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Eastman, D. L. 2011. *Paul the Martyr: The Cult of the Apostle in the Latin West*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.

Edwards, M. 2017. "Constantine in the Pagan Memory." In *Constantine: Religious Faith and Imperial Policy*, edited by A. E. Siecienski. London: Routledge, 76-90.

Egbert, J. C. 1896. *Introduction to the Study of Latin Inscriptions*. New York: American Book Company.

Eger, C. 2017. “Between Amuletic Ornament and Sign of Authority: Christian Symbols on Mediterranean Dress Accessories of the Fourth to Sixth Centuries.” In *Graphic Signs of Identity, Faith, and Power in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, edited by I. H. Garipzanov, C. Goodson, and H. Maguire. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 281-324.

Ehrenberg, V. 1974. *Man, State and Deity: Essays in Ancient History.* London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.

Ehrman, B. D. 2003. *The Apostolic Fathers*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ehrman, B. D. 2018. *The Triumph of Christianity: How a Forbidden Religion Swept the World*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Elkins, N. T. 2013 “A Note on Late Roman Art: The Provincial Origins of Camp Gate and Baldachin Iconography on the Late Imperial Coinage.” *AJN* 25:283-302.

Elliott, T. G. 1990. “The Language of Constantine's Propaganda.” *TAPA* 120:349-353.

Ellison, M. D. 2018. “”Secular” Portraits, Identity, and the Christianization of the Roman Household.” In *The Routledge Handbook of Early Christian Art,* edited by R. M. Jensen and M. D. Ellison. London: Routledge.

Elm, S. 2012. *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Elsner, J. 1995. *Art and the Roman Viewer: The Transformation of Art from the Pagan World to Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elsner, J. 1998. *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph: The Art of the Roman Empire AD 100-450*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elsner, J. 2007. *Roman Eyes: Visuality & Subjectivity in Art & Text*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Elsner, J. 2009. “The Christian Museum in Southern France: Antiquity, Display, and Liturgy from the Counter-Reformation to the Aftermath of Vatican II.” *Oxford Art Journal* 32(2):181-204.

Epigraphic Database Bari. 1988. *Inscriptions by Christians in Rome (3rd-8th cent. CE)*. https://www.edb.uniba.it/.

Errington, R. M. 2006. *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Esmonde Cleary, A. S. 1989. *The Ending of Roman Britain*. London: Routledge.

Estiot, M. 2012. *Monnaies de l'Empire Romain / Roman Imperial Coinage AD 268-276.* http://www.ric.mom.fr/.

Evans, A. 1938. *An Illustrative Selection of Greek and Greco-Roman Gems: To which is Added a Minoan and Proto-Hellenic Series; Acquired, through over 60 years of Travel and Research in Crete, Mainland Greece, the East Adriatic Coastlands, Sicily, and Magna Graecia*. Heidelberg, Germany: Heidelberg University Press.

Evans, C. A. 2015. *Jesus and the Remains of his Day: Studies in Jesus and the Evidence of Material Culture*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers.

Fairbairn, D., and R. M. Reeves. 2019. *The Story of Creeds and Confessions: Tracing the Development of the Christian Faith.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Felle, A. E. 2016. "Una lunga svolta Costantiniana: tradizione e mutamenti nellaprassi epigrafica dei Cristiani di Roma prima e dopo Costantino (260-320)." In *Costantino e i Costantinidi. l'innovazione Costantiniana, le sue radici e i suoi sviluppi: Acta XVI Congressus Internationalis Archeologiae Christianae (Roma, 22-28 Settembre 2013),* edited by O. Brandt and V. Fiocchi Nicolai. 2 vols. Vatican: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1159-1178.

Fenwick, J. 1851. *Treasure Trove in Northumberland*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: George Bouchier Richardson.

Ferguson, E. 2009. *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.

Ferris, I. 2018. *Cave Canem: Animals and Roman Society.* Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing Ltd.

Ferris, I. 2021. *Visions of the Roman North: Art and Identity in Northern Roman Britain.* Oxford: Archaeopress.

Field, L. L. 1998. *Liberty, Dominion, and the Two Swords: On the Origins of Western Political Theology (180-398)*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Filippi, G. 2000. "Placa di Felicissimus, pastore e servo imperiale presso la basilica di San Paolo Fuori le Mura." In *Pietro e Paolo: La storia, il culto, la memoria nei primi secoli,* edited by A. Donati. Milan: Electa.

Finegan, J. 1969. *The Archaeology of the New Testament: The Life of Jesus and the Beginning of the Early Church*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Finoskov. 2013. "Saint-Trophime d'Arles35, sarcophage Geminus." *Wikicommons.* https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint-Trophime_d%27Arles35,sarcophage_Geminus.jpg.

Forsythe, G. 2012. *Time in Roman Religion: One Thousand Years of Religious History*. New York: Routledge.

Foss, C. 1999. "Coinage." In *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World,* edited by G. W. Bowersock, P. Brown, and O. Grabar. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 383-385.

Foster, R. T., and D. P. McCarthy. 2015. *Ossa Latinitatis sola ad mentem reginaldi rationemque.* Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press.

Fowden, E. K. 1999. *The Barbarian Plain: Saint Sergius between Rome and Iran*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fox, R. L. 1986. *Pagans and Christians*. New York: Knopf.

Frakes, R. M. 2006. "The Dynasty of Constantine down to 363." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine,* edited by N. E. Lenski. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 91-107.

Frend, W. H. C. 1952. *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Fridh, A. 1976. "Zum Bedeutungswandel von Lat. Quaerere." *Eranos: Acta Philologica Suecana* 74:139-166.

Frye, R. N., J. F. Gilliam, C. Ingholt, and B. Welles. 1955. Inscriptions from Dura-Europos. *YCS* 14:127-213.

Gaddis, M. 2005. *There is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ: Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Gamble, H. Y. 1995. *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Gardthausen, V. 1924. *Das Alte Monogramm*. Leipzig, Germany: Karl W. Hiersemann.

Garipzanov, I. 2015. "The Rise of Graphicacy in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages." *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 46:1-22.

Garipzanov, I. 2017. "Monograms as Graphic Signs of Authority on Early Medieval Coins (from the Mid-Fifth to the Middle of the Seventh Centuries)." In *Graphic Signs of Identity, Faith, and Power in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages,* edited by I. H. Garipzanov, C. Goodson, and H. Maguire. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishing, 325-351.

Garipzanov, I. 2018. *Graphic Signs of Authority in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, 300-900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gaspar, D. 1993. "When has Chi-Rho become a Christian Symbol?" *Bronces y religión Romana. Actas del 11 Congreso Internacional de Bronces Antiguos, Madrid, Mayo-Junio, 1990.* Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, 207-212.

Gerbner, K. 2018. *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World.* Early American Studies. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Gesenius, W. 1857. *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*. Translated by S. P. Tregelles. London: Bagster.

Glancy, J. A. 2006. *Slavery in Early Christianity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Glare, P. G. W., ed. 1968. *Oxford Latin Dictionary.* 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goodson, C. 2017. "Christograms on North African Lamps: Considering Context." In *Graphic Signs of Identity, Faith, and Power in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages,* edited by I. H. Garipzanov, C. Goodson, and H. Maguire. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishing, 225-278.

Gordon, A. E. 1983. *Illustrated Introduction to Latin Epigraphy.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gould, G. 2007. "What did Constantine do for Christianity?" In *Decoding Early Christianity: Truth and Legend in the Early Church,* edited by J. L. Houlden. Oxford: Greenwood World Pub, 125-133.

Grabar, A. 1968. *Christian Iconography: A Study of its Origins*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Green, B. 2010a. *Christianity in Ancient Rome: The First Three Centuries*. London: T & T Clark.

Green, R. R. H. 2010b. "Constantine as Patron of Christian Latin Poetry." In *Papers presented at the Fifteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 2007. Tertullian to Tyconius, Egypt before Nicaea, Athanasius and his Opponents*, edited by J. Baun, A. Cameron, M. Edwards, and M. Vinzent. *Studia Patristica Vol. 46.* Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 65-76.

Grierson, P., and M. Mays. 1992. *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection: From Arcadius and Honorius to the Accession of Anastasius*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Grig, L. 2004. “Portraits, Pontiffs and the Christianization of Fourth-Century Rome.” *PBSR* 72:203-230.

Grigg, R. 1977. Constantine the Great and the Cult without Images. *Viator* 8:1-32.

Grossi Gondi, F. 1920. *I Monumenti Cristiani dei primi sei secoli.* Vol. 1, *Trattato di epigrafia Cristiana Latina e Greca del mondo Romano Occidentale*. Rome: Università Gregoriana.

Gruen, E. 2020. “The Sibylline Oracles and Resistance to Rome.” In *The Future of Rome: Roman, Greek, Jewish and Christian Visions*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 189-205.

Grünewald, T. 1990. *Constantinus Maximus Augustus: Herrschaftspropaganda in der Zeitgenössischen Überlieferung.* Stuttgart: F. Steiner.

Guarducci, M. 1960a. *The Tomb of St. Peter: The New Discoveries in the Sacred Grottoes of the Vatican*. Translated by J. McLellan. New York: Hawthorn Books.

Guarducci, M. 1960b. “The Tomb of St. Peter.” *St Peters Basilica Info*. Stpetersbasilica.info/Necropolis/MG/TheTombofStPeter-8.htm.

Guiley, R. 2004. *The Encyclopedia of Angels.* 2nd ed. New York: Facts on File.

Habinek, T. 2017. “Optatian and his Ouevre: Explorations in ontology.” In *Morphogrammata/ The Lettered Art of Optatian: Figuring Cultural Transformations in the Age of Constantine,* edited by M. Squire and J. Wienand. Paderborn, Germany: Wilhelm Fink, 391-426.

Hachlili, R. 2001. *The Menorah, the Ancient Seven-Armed Candelabrum: Origin, Form & Significance*. Leiden: Brill.

Hadjinicolaou, N. 1978. *Art History and Class Struggle*. London: Pluto Press.

Hamel, S. C., ed. 2011. *Semiotics: Theory and Applications*. New York: Nova Science.

Handley, M. A. 2003. *Death, Society and Culture: Inscriptions and Epitaphs in Gaul and Spain, AD 300-750*. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Harper, K. 2011. *Slavery in the Late Roman World, AD 275-425*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harries, J. 2003. “Pagans, Christians and Public Entertainment in Late Antique Italy.” In *Bread and Circuses: Euergetism and Municipal Patronage in Roman Italy,* edited by K. Lomas and T. Cornell. London: Routledge, 125-141.

Harries, J. 2012. *Imperial Rome AD 284 to 363: The New Empire*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Harrison, R. K. 1964. *Archaeology of the New Testament*. New York: Association Press.

Hartman, J. J. 2016. "Allusion and Cultural Memory in Late Antiquity: Ausonius, Prudentius, and Claudian." Ph.D. diss., University of Washington.

Hatt, J. J. 1950. "La vision de Constantin au sanctuaire de Grand et l'origine celtique du *labarum*." *Latomus* 9(4):427-436.

Haverfield, F. 1889. "The Gold Bars of Kraszna." *CR* 3(4):186.

Heath, J. 2010. "'Nomina Sacra' and 'Sacra Memoria' before the Monastic Age." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 61(2):516-549.

Heath, S. 2011. "Trading at the Edge: Pottery, Coins, and Household Objects at Dura-Europos." In *Edge of Empires: Pagans, Jews, and Christians at Roman Dura-Europos,* edited by J. Y. Chi and S. Heath. New York: Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University, 63-123.

Hebblewhite, M. 2017. *The Emperor and the Army in the Later Roman Empire, AD 235-395*. London: Routledge.

Hekster, O. 2003. "Coins and Messages: Audience Targeting on Coins of Different Denominations?" In *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power: Proceedings of the Third Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Roman Empire, c. 200 B.C. – A.D. 476) Netherlands Institute in Rome, March 20-23, 2002*, edited by L. De Blois, et al. Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben.

Hendy, M. F. 1985. *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300-1450*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Henig, M. 1984. *Religion in Roman Britain*. London: Batsford.

Henig, M. 1995. *The Art of Roman Britain*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Henig, M. 2001. "The Unchanging Face of God." In *Outside Archaeology: Material Culture and Poetic Imagination,* edited by C. Finn and M. Henig. Oxford, England: Archaeopress, 112.

Herrin, J. 2001. *Women in Purple: Rulers of Medieval Byzantium.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Herzog August Bibliothek. n.d. *Wolfenbüttel Digital Library (WDB).* https://opac.lbs-braunschweig.gbv.de/DB=2/.

Higgins, D. 1987. *Pattern Poetry*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Hill, G. F. 1914. *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Palestine*. London: Longmans.

Hinson, E. G. 1995. *The Church Triumphant: A History of Christianity up to 1300*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press.

Hobbs, R. 2006. *Late Roman Precious Metal Deposits, c. AD 200-700: Changes Over Time and Space*. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Hobbs, R. 2016. "Mine's Bigger than Yours: Comparing Values of Late Roman Hoards." In *Roman Finds: Context and Theory. Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of Durham*, edited by R. Hingley and S. Willis. Oxford: Oxbow, 77-85.

Hoddinott, R. F. 1963. *Early Byzantine Churches in Macedonia and Southern Serbia: A Study of the Origins and the Initial Development of East Christian Art*. London: Macmillan.

Hodge, B., and G. R. Kress. 1988. *Social Semiotics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Hollard, D., and F. López Sánchez. 2014. *Le chrisme et le phénix: images monétaires et mutations idéologiques au IVe siècle*. Bordeaux: Ausonius Éditions.

Holloway, R. R. 2004. *Constantine & Rome*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Honnold Mudd Library, Special Collections. n.d. "Nag Hammadi Archive." *The Claremont Colleges Digital Library.* https://ccdl.claremont.edu/digital/collection/nha.

Hoover, J. A. 2018. *The Donatist Church in an Apocalyptic Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Horsley, G. H. R. 1987. *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity.* Vol. 4, *A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published in 1979*. Sydney, NSW: The Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University.

Hoskier, H. C. 1914. *Codex B and its Allies*. London: Bernard Quaritch.

Howells, D. T. 2015. *A Catalogue of the Late Antique Gold Glass in the British Museum*. London: British Museum Research Publications.

Howells, R., and J. Negreiros. 2012. *Visual Culture*. Cambridge: Polity.

Howgego, C. 1995. *Ancient History from Coins*. London: Routledge.

Hoyer, D. 2016. “Turning the Inside Out: The Divergent Experiences of Gaul and Africa during the Third Century AD.” In *Rome and the Worlds beyond Its Frontiers*, edited by D. Slootjes and M. Peachin. Leiden: Brill, 67-95.

Hughes, I. 2013. *Imperial Brothers: Valentinian, Valens and the Disaster at Adrianople*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military.

Hull, R. F. 2010. *Story of the New Testament: Movers, Materials, Motives, Methods and Models*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.

Hünemörder, C. “Laurel.” In *Brill’s New Pauly Online,* edited by H. Cancik and H. Schneider. English Edition by C. F. Salazar. Accessed September 12, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e709860.

Hunt, D. 2007. “Valentinian and the Bishops: Ammianus 30.9.5 in Context.” In *Ammianus after Julian: The Reign of Valentinian and Valens in Books 26 - 31 of the Res Gestae,* edited by J. den Boeft, J. W. Drijvers, D. den Hengst, and H. C. Teitler. Leiden: Brill, 71-93.

Hunt, E. D. 1982. *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312-460*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Hurtado, L. W. 1998. “The Origin of the Nomina Sacra: A Proposal.” *JBL* 117(4):655-673.

Hurtado, L. W. 2000. “The Earliest Evidence of an Emerging Christian Material and Visual Culture: The Codex, the *Nomina Sacra* and the Staurogram.” In *Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity: Essays in Honour of Peter Richardson,* edited by S. G. Wilson and M. Desjardins. Waterloo, ON: Published for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion (Corporation Canadienne des Sciences Religieuses) by Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 271-288.

Hurtado, L. W. 2006a. *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.

Hurtado, L. W. 2006b. “The Staurogram in Early Christian Manuscripts: The Earliest Visual Reference to the Crucified Jesus?” In *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Text and their World,* edited by T. J. Kraus and T. Nicklas. Leiden: Brill, 207-226.

Hurtado, L. W. 2017. “Earliest Christian Graphic Symbols: Examples and References from the Second/Third Centuries.” In *Graphic Signs of Identity, Faith, and Power in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages,* edited by I. H. Garipzanov, C. Goodson, and H. Maguire. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishing, 25-44.

Hurtado, L. W. 2018. *Texts and Artefacts: Selected Essays on Textual Criticism and Early Christian Manuscripts*. London: T & T Clark.

Huskinson, J. 1974. “Some Pagan Mythological Figures and Their Significance in Early Christian Art.” *PBSR* 42:68-97.

Jackson, R. 2018. “The Ashwell Hoard, *Dea Senuna* and Comparable Finds from Britain and the Wider Roman World.” In *Dea Senuna: Treasure, Cult and Ritual at Ashwell, Hertfordshire,* edited by R. Jackson and G. R. Burleigh. London: The British Museum, 121-142.

James, E. 2012. *Constantine the Great: Warlord of Rome*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military.

James, L. 2017. *Mosaics in the Medieval World: From Late Antiquity to the Fifteenth Century.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jamir, L. 2016. *Exclusion and Judgment in Fellowship Meals: The Socio-Historical Background of 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.* Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications.

Janssens, J. 1981. *Vita e morte del Cristiano negli epitaffi di Roma anteriori al sec. VII.* Vol. 223 Analecta Gregoriana. Rome: Università Gregoriana Editrice.

Jensen, R. M. 2000a. “Art.” In *The Early Christian World,* edited by P. F. Esler. London: Routledge, 747-772.

Jensen, R. M. 2000b. *Understanding Early Christian Art*. New York: Routledge.

Jensen, R. M. 2017. *The Cross: History, Art, and Controversy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Jijina, N. C. 2007. “Sarcophagus Appliqué: Gorgon Mask.” In *Greeks on the Black Sea: Ancient Art from the Hermitage,* edited by A. A. Trofimova. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 200.

Johns, C. 2010. *The Hoxne Late Roman Treasure: Gold Jewellery and Silver Plate*. London: Methuen & Co.

Jones, A. H. M. 1956. “Numismatics and History.” In *Essays in Roman Coinage Presented to Harold Mattingly,* edited by R. A. G. Carson and C. H. V. Sutherland. London: Oxford University Press, 13-33.

Jones, A. H. M. 1978. Reprint. *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*. Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press. Original edition, London: Published by Hodder & Stoughton for the English Universities Press, 1948.

Kaartinen, S., and T. Latomaa. 2011. “The Role of Sign Vehicles in Mediating Teachers’ Mathematical Problem Solving.” *Semiotics: Theory and Applications,* edited by S. C. Hamel. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 233-246.

Kaatz, K. 2012. *Early Controversies and the Growth of Christianity*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Kahlos, M. 2009. *Forbearance and Compulsion: The Rhetoric of Religious Tolerance and Intolerance in Late Antiquity*. London: Duckworth.

Kalinka, E. 1900. "Inschriften aus Syrien." *ÖJh* 3:19-36.

Kalinowski, A. 2017. "A Mosaic of Daniel in the Lions' Den from Borj el Youdi (*Furnos Minus*) Tunisia: The Iconography of Martyrdom and the Arena in Roman North Africa." *AntAfr* 53:115-128.

Kalvesmaki, J. 2013. *The Theology of Arithmetic: Number Symbolism in Platonism and Early Christianity*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies.

Kanael, B. 1952. "The Coins of King Herod of the Third Year." *JQR* 42(3):261-264.

Kanael, B. 1963. "Ancient Jewish Coins and Their Historical Importance." *The Biblical Archaeologist* 26(2):38-62.

Keene, C. H. 1891. "On a Stone with a Greek Inscription (Early Christian) from Upper Egypt." *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 2:295-298.

Kellermann, D. 1974. "Wreath." In *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament: Volume XI,* edited by G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, and H-J Fabry. Translated by D. E. Green. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 18-27.

Kelly, J. F. 2009. *The Ecumenical Councils of the Catholic Church: A History*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

Kemmers, F. 2019. *The Functions and Use of Roman Coinage: An Overview of 21st Century Scholarship.* Leiden: Brill.

Kenner, F. V. 1888. "Römische Goldbarren mit Stämpeln." In *Archaeologisch-Epigraphische Mittheilungen aus Oesterreich-Ungarn,* edited by O. Benndorf and E. Bormann. Vienna: Druck und Verlag von Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1-24.

Keppie, L. J. 1991. *Understanding Roman Inscriptions*. London: B. T. Batsford Ltd.

Keresztes, P. 1981. *Constantine, a Great Christian Monarch and Apostle*. Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben.

King, C. E. 1987. *Roman Silver Coins.* Vol. 5, *Carausius to Romulus Augustus*. London: Seaby Publications Ltd.

Kirsch, J. 2004. *God against the Gods: The History of the War between Monotheism and Polytheism*. New York: Viking Compass.

Klauser, T. 1967. "Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Christlichen Kunst." *JAC* 10:82-120.

Kleon3. 2017. "Ijzeren Helm met Christogram uit Kessel (350-400AD)." *Wikicommons.* https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Top_or_Topic_(CC,_Maastricht),_ijzeren_helm_met_christogram_uit_Kessel_(350-400AD).jpg.

Kondoleon, C. 1994. "85. Griffin Lamp" In *Art of Late Rome and Byzantium in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts,* edited by A. Gonosová and C. Kondoleon. Richmond, VA: The Museum of Fine Arts, 250-251.

Korhonen, K. 2006. "Velitrae*."* Unpublished manuscript for *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* X (2nd ed.), edited by H. Solin. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/3480089/Velitrae.

Kurth, D. 2009. *WildWinds.* wildwinds.com.

Lake, K., ed. and trans. 1926. *Eusebius: Ecclesiastical History, Vol. I: Books 1-5.* Loeb Classical Library 153. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lambert, M. 2010. *Christians and Pagans: The Conversion of Britain from Alban to Bede*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Lanciani, R. A. 1897. *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome: A Companion Book for Students and Travelers*. London: Macmillan and Co.

Lanckoroński, K. 1892. *Städte Pamphyliens und Pisidiens II. Pisidien.* 2nd ed. Wien: F. Tempsky.

Lander, S. L. 2016. *Ritual Sites and Religious Rivalries in Late Roman North Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lanzi, F., and G. Lanzi. 2004. *Saints and their Symbols: Recognizing Saints in Art and in Popular Images*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

Larysse, C. 2012. "Early New Testament Manuscripts and Their Dates: A Critique of Theological Palaeography." *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 88(4):443-474.

Leadbetter, B. 2009. *Galerius and the Will of Diocletian*. London: Routledge.

Leader-Newby, R. 2018. "Early Christian Silver: Sacred and Domestic." In *The Routledge Handbook of Early Christian Art,* edited by R. M. Jensen and M. D. Ellison. London: Routledge.

Le Bohec, Y. 2005. *Histoire de l'Afrique romaine: 146 avant J.-C. - 439 après J.-C.* Paris: Picard.

Lee, A. D. 2006. "Traditional Religions." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine,* edited by N. E. Lenski. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 159-179.

Lee, A. D. 2013. *From Rome to Byzantium AD 363 to 565: The Transformation of Ancient Rome*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Lefebvre, G. 1907. *Recueil des inscriptions grecques-chrétiennes d'Égypte.* Egypt: Le Caire, Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale.

Leithart, P. J. 2010. *Defending Constantine: The Twilight of an Empire and the Dawn of Christendom*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Lenski, N. E. 2002. *Failure of Empire: Valens and the Roman State in the Fourth Century A.D.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lenski, N. E. 2006. "The Reign of Constantine." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine,* edited by N. E. Lenski. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 59-90.

Lenski, N. E. 2016a. *Constantine and the Cities: Imperial Authority and Civic Politics*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Lenski, N. E. 2016b. "Constantine and the Donatists: Exploring the Limits of Religious Toleration." In *Religiose Toleranz: 1700 Jahre nach dem Edikt von Mailand,* edited by M. Wallraff. Berlin: De Gruyter, 101-139.

Leone, A. 2013. *The End of the Pagan City: Religion, Economy, and Urbanism in Late Antique North Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Levitan, W. 1985. "Dancing at the End of the Rope: Optatian Porfyry and the Field of Roman Verse." *TAPA* 115:245-269.

Lewis, A. M. 2008. "Augustus and his Horoscope Reconsidered." *Phoenix* 62(3/4): 308-337.

Lewis, N. D. 2010. "Catacombs." In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome,* edited by M. Gagarin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Accessed 12 September, 2021. https://www-oxfordreference-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780195170726.001.0001/acref-9780195170726-e-218.

Lewis, N. D. 2016. "Popular Christianity and Lived Religion in Late Antique Rome: Seeing Magic in the Catacombs." In *Popular Culture in the Ancient World,* edited by L. Grig. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 257-276.

Lewis, P. E. 2003. “The Origin of the Chi-Rho Monogram as a Christian Symbol.” *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia* 14:19-31.

Liu, C. H., and F. Luton. 2011. *Vygotsky's Psycho-Semiotics: Theories, Instrument and Interpretive Analyses.* Bern: Peter Lang AG.

Liverani, P. 2020. “The Evolution of the Lateran: From the Domus to the Episcopal Complex.” In *The Basilica of Saint John Lateran to 1600,* edited by L. Bosman, I. Haynes, and P. Liverani. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 6-24.

Llewelyn, S. R. 1998. *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity.* Vol. 8*, A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published 1984-85*. Sydney, NSW: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University.

Long, J. 2009. “How to Read a Halo: Three (or more) Versions of Constantine's Vision.” In *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity*, edited by A. Cain and N. E. Lenski. Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 227-236.

Longenecker, B. W. 2015. *The Cross before Constantine: The Early Life of a Christian Symbol*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

López Sánchez, F. 2012. “Julian and his Coinage: A Very Constantinian Prince.” In *Emperor and Author*, edited by N. Baker-Brian and S. Tougher. Swansea, Wales: The Classical Press of Wales, 159-211.

López Sánchez, F. 2016. “Under this Sign You Shall be the Ruler! Eusebius, the Chi-Rho Letters and the Archê of Constantine.” In *Beginning and End: From Ammianus Marcellinus to Eusebius of Caesarea,* edited by Á. Sánchez-Ostiz. Huelva, Spain: Universidad de Huelva, 137-158.

Lorenzetti, L. 2014. “Greek/Latin Bilingualism.” In Vol. 2, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Greek Language and Linguistics,* edited by G. K. Giannakis and V. Bubenik. Leiden: Brill.

Lunn-Rockliffe, S. 2017. “The Power of the Jewelled Style: Christian Signs and Names in Optatian’s Versus Intexti and on Gems.” In *Morphogrammata/ The Lettered Art of Optatian: Figuring Cultural Transformations in the Age of Constantine,* edited by M. Squire and J. Wienand. Paderborn, Germany: Wilhelm Fink, 427-460.

Lysons, S. (1808). *Reliquiae Britannico-Romanae. Containing Figures of Roman Antiquities Discovered in Various Parts of England.* Vol. 1 (pt. 3)*, Figures of Mosaic Pavements Discovered near Frampton in Dorsetshire*. London: T. Bensley.

Maccoby, H. 1991. *Paul and Hellenism*. London: SCM Press.

Mackensen, M. 2007. “Vergoldete Bronzebeschläge mit Christogramm von spätrömischen Kammhelmen aus dem mittleren und unteren Donauraum.” *Bayerische Vorgeschichtsblätter* 72: 355-366.

Magen, A., and G. Tholin. 1881. *Trois diplômes d’honneur du IVe siècle.* Agen, France: Imprimerie Veuve Lamy.

Magness, J. 2010. “Third Century Jews and Judaism at Beth Shearim and Dura Europus.” In *Religious Diversity in Late Antiquity,* edited by S. Bangert, D. M. Gwynn and L. Lavan. Leiden: Brill, 135-166.

Maguire, H. 2017. “How did Early Byzantine Ornament Work?” In *Graphic Signs of Identity, Faith, and Power in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages,* edited by I. H. Garipzanov, C. Goodson, and H. Maguire. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishing, 223-253.

Marincola, J. 2003. *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Marrou, H. I. 1978. “Autour du monogramme Constantinien.” In *Christiana tempora. Mélanges d'histoire, d'archéologie, d'épigraphie et de patristique,* edited by H. I. Marrou. Rome: École Française de Rome, 239-250.

Martinez, D. G. 2009. “The Papyri and Early Christianity.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology,* edited by R. S. Bagnail. New York: Oxford University Press, 590-622.

Martínez, J. A. 2011. “Horrea y aprovisionamiento en Hispania (ss. IV-VI).” In *Horrea d'Hispanie et de la Méditerranée Romaine,* edited by J. Arce Martínez and B. Goffaux. Madrid: Pedro Mateos Cruz, 287-298.

Martínez-Fazio, L. M. 1972. *La segunda basílica de san Pablo extramuros: estudios sobre su fundacion*. Rome: Universitá Gregoriana Editrice.

Marucchi, O. 1912. *Christian Epigraphy: An Elementary Treatise, with a Collection of Ancient Christian Inscriptions, mainly of Roman Origin.* Translated by A. Willis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marucchi, O. 1914. *Roma subterranea cristina: monumenti del cimitero di Domitillo sulla via Ardeatina.* Rome: Spithoever.

Marucchi, O. 1935. *Manual of Christian Archeology.* 4th Italian ed. Edited by G. Belvederi. Translated by H. Vecchierello. Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, Franciscan Monastery.

Mason S. 2011. “The Writings of Josephus: Their Significance for New Testament Study.” In *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus,* edited by T. Holmén and S. E. Porter. Leiden: Brill, 1639-1686.

Mastrocinque, A. 2017. *The Mysteries of Mithras: A Different Account*. Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck.

Mazza, R. 2019. “Dating Early Christian Papyri: Old and New Methods – Introduction.” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament.* 42(1):46-57.

Mazzoleni, D. 2014. “Lezioni di archeologia cristiana.” In *Origini e sviluppo dell'epigrafia Cristiana*, edited by O. B. F. Bisconti. (pp. 445-499). Vatican: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana.

Mazzoleni, D. 2015. “The Rise of Christianity.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy*, edited by C. Bruun and J. C. Edmondson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 445-468.

McCaul, J. 1868. “Christian Epitaphs of the First Six Centuries.” *Canadian Journal of Science, Literature & History* 12(67):2-26.

McClanan, A. L. 2002. *Representations of Early Byzantine Empresses: Image and Empire*. New York: Palgrave.

McCruden, K. 2008. *Solidarity Perfected: Beneficent Christology in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

McDonald, M. F., ed. and trans. 1965. *Lactantius: The Minor Works.* The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 54. Washington: DC: Catholic University of America Press.

McEvoy, M. 2013. *Child Emperor Rule in the Late Roman West, AD 367-455*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McNamee, K. 1981. *Abbreviations in Greek Literary Papyri and Ostraca*. Ann Arbor, MI: Scholars Press.

Meredith, H. G. 2011. “Christianizing Constantine: Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* as a Late Antique Social Canvas.” In *Objects in Motion: The Circulation of Religion and Sacred Objects in the Late Antique and Byzantine World,* edited by H. G. Meredith. Oxford: Archaeopress, 7-22.

Metcalf, W. E. 2012. Introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Coinage,* edited by W. E. Metcalf. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3-11.

Meyers, E. M. 1971. *Jewish Ossuaries: Reburial and Rebirth*. Rome: Biblical Institute Press.

Milburn, R. L. P. 1988. *Early Christian Art and Architecture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mill, J. S. 2007. "On Liberty." In *John Stuart Mill: On Liberty*, edited by M. B. Mathias. *Longman Library of Primary Sources in Philosophy*, series edited by D. Kolak. New York: Pearson Longman.

Mommsen, T., ed. 1961. *Chronica minora saec. IV, V, VI, VII*. Vol. 1, *Accedunt tabulae duae. MGH auctorum antiquissimorum tomus* 9. Berlin: Druckerei Hildebrand. Original edition, Berlin: Weidmannos, 1892.

Monceaux, P. 1908. "Enquête sur l'épigraphie chrétienne d'Afrique." In *Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres de l'Institut de France* 12. Paris, France: Imprimerie Nationale, 161-339.

Mondello, C. 2019. "Using and Reusing Tokens: Some Remarks about Christian Graffiti on Contorniates." In *Tokens: Culture, Connections, Communities,* edited by A. Crisà, M. Gkikaki, and C. Rowan. London: Royal Numismatic Society, 145-162.

Moreau, J., ed. and trans. 1954. *Lactance: de la mort des persécuteurs. I. Introduction, texte critique et traduction* (2 volumes ed.). Paris: Éditions de Cerf.

Morey, C. R., and G. Ferrari, eds. 1959. *The Gold-Glass Collection of the Vatican Library with Additional Catalogues of Other Gold-Class*. Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

Morris, I. 1992. *Death-Ritual and Society in Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moss, C. R. 2010. *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mukarovsky, J. 1976. "Art as Semiotic Fact." In *Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions*, edited by L. Latejka and I. R. Titunik. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 6-11.

Mullen, R. L. 2004. *The Expansion of Christianity: A Gazetteer of its First Three Centuries*. Leiden: Brill.

Musée du Louvre. n.d. *Collections*. https://collections.louvre.fr/en/.

Nicholson, O. 2004. "Arnobius and Lactantius." In *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature,* edited by F. Young, L. Ayres, and A. Louth. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 259-265.

Nicolay, J. 2007. *Armed Batavians: Use and Significance of Weaponry and Horse Gear from Non-Military Contexts in the Rhine Delta (50 BC to AD 450)*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Noble, J. 2021. *Common Property, the Golden Age, and Empire in Acts 2: 42-47 and 4:32-35*. London: T & T Clark.

Nöth, W. 1990. *Handbook of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG. n.d. *Auctions: Catalogues.* https://www.arsclassicacoins.com/catalogues/.

Nuzzo, D. 2001. "Amulet and Grave in Late Antiquity: Some Examples from Roman Cemeteries." In *Burial, Society and Context in the Roman World,* edited by J. Pearce, M. Millett, and M. Struck. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 249-255.

O'Brien, P. K, ed. 1999. *Oxford Atlas of World History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Odahl, C. M. 2010. *Constantine and the Christian Empire*. London: Routledge.

Olcott, G. N. 1904. *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae Epigraphicae: A Dictionary of the Latin Inscription*. Rome: Loescher & Co. (Bretschneider & Regenberg).

Omissi, A. 2018. *Emperors and Usurpers in the Later Roman Empire: Civil War, Panegyric, and the Construction of Legitimacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Painter, K. S. 1967. "The Roman Site at Hinton St. Mary, Dorset." *BMQ* 32(1/2):15-31.

Painter, K. S. 1971. "Villas and Christianity in Roman Britain." *BMQ* 35(1):156-175.

Painter, K. S. 1977a. *Gold and Silver in the Late Roman World*. London: British Museum Publications.

Painter, K. S. 1977b. *The Mildenhall Treasure: Roman Silver from East Anglia.* London: British Museum Publications.

Painter, K. S. 1977c. *The Water Newton Early Christian Silver.* London: British Museum Publications.

Palanque, J. R. 1966. "Sur la date du 'de mortibus persecutorum.'" In *Mélanges d'archéologie, d'épigraphie et d'histoire: offerts à Jérôme Carcopino,* edited by J. Heurgon, W. Seston, and G. Charles-Picard. Paris: Hachette, 711-716.

Papi, C. 2011. "L'apostolo Paolo nelle iscrizioni cristiane di Roma." In *Paulo. Apostolo. Martyri : L'apostolo San Paolo nella storia, nell'arte e nell'archeologia,* edited by O. Bucarelli and M. M. Morales. Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 183-218.

Pasquali, G. 1910. “Die Composition der Vita Constantini des Eusebius.” In *Hermes: Zeitschrift für Classische Philologie,* edited by F. Leo and C. Robert. Berlin: Weidmannsche, 369-386.

Pearce, S. M. 2004. *South-Western Britain in the Early Middle Ages*. London: Continuum.

Pearce, S. M. 2008. “The Hinton St Mary Mosaic Pavement: Christ or Emperor?” *Britannia* 39:193-218.

Peirce, C. S. 1932. *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*. Vol. 2, *Elements of Logic.* Edited by C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Pelttari, A. 2014. *The Space that Remains: Reading Latin Poetry in Late Antiquity*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Perret, L. 1851. Catacombes de Rome. Vol V: inscriptions, figures et symbols graves sur pierre. Paris, France: Gide et J. Baudry.

Perring, D. 2002. *The Roman House in Britain*. London: Routledge.

Perring, D. 2003. “'Gnosticism' in Fourth-Century Britain: The Frampton Mosaics Reconsidered.” *Britannia* 34:97-127.

Petocz, A. 2011. “Re-thinking the Place of Semiotics in Psychology and its Implications for Psychological Research.” In *Semiotics: Theory and Applications,* edited by S. C. Hamel. New York: Nova Science, 99-147.

Petts, D. 2003. *Christianity in Roman Britain*. Stroud, Gloucestershire, England: Tempus.

Petts, D. 2016. “Christianity in Roman Britain.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Britain*, edited by M. Millett, L. Revell, and A. J. Moore. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 660-680.

Pickard, J. 2021. *The Origins of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.* Yorkshire, UK: Pen & Sword Ltd.

Pietri, C., and L. Pietri, eds. 1999. *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire.* Vol. 1, *A-K 2 Italie (313-604)*. Rome: École française de Rome.

Pitt-Rivers, G. 1966. *The Riddle of the "Labarum" and the Origin of Christian Symbols*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Pohlsander, H. A. 2004. *The Emperor Constantine*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Polara, I., ed. 1973. *Publilii Optatiani Porfyrii Carmina. I. Textus adiecto Indice Verborum*. Torino: G. B. Paravia.

Pollard, N. 2000. *Soldiers, Cities, and Civilians in Roman Syria*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Potter, D. S. 2013. *Constantine the Emperor*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Potthoff, S. E. 2017. *The Afterlife in Early Christian Carthage: Near-Death Experience, Ancestor Cult, and the Archaeology of Paradise*. London: Routledge.

Poyatos, F. 1988. *Literary Anthropology*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.

Preisendanz, K. 1913. "Ein Straßburger Liebeszauber." *ArchRW* 16:547-554.

Prentice, W. K. 1908. *Publications of an American Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1899-1900.* Part 3, *Greek and Latin Inscriptions*. New York: Century Co.

President and Fellows of Harvard College. 2022. "Collections." *Harvard Art Museums: Arthur M. Sackler Museum*. https://harvardartmuseums.org/collections.

Prins, J. 2000. "The 'Fortune' of a Late Roman Officer: A Hoard from the Meuse Valley (Netherlands) with Helmet and Gold Coins. *BJb* 200:309-328.

Prusac, M. 2014. "Presence and the Image Controversies in the Third and Fourth Centuries AD." In *Iconoclasm from Antiquity to Modernity,* edited by K. Kolrud and M. Prusac. Franham, Surry, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 41-56.

Puică, I. M. 2010. "Abbreviations and Symbols Founded in Biblical Manuscripts and Christians Icons." *European Journal of Science and Theology* 6(3):1-21.

Quasten, J. 1938. "Die Grabinschrift des Beratius Nikatoras." *RM* 53: 50-69.

Rantala, J. 2017. *The Ludi Saeculares of Septimius Severus: The Ideologies of a New Roman Empire*. Milton Park, Abingdon-on-Thames, Oxon: Routledge.

Raybould, M. E. 1999. *A Study of Inscribed Material from Roman Britain: An Inquiry into Some Aspects of Literacy in Romano-British Society*. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Redpath, H. A. 1907. *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*. London: Methuen.

Rees, E. 2020. *Early Christianity in South-West Britain: Wessex, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and the Channel Islands.* Macclesfield, UK: Windgather Press.

Regev, E. 2013. *The Hasmoneans: Ideology, Archaeology, Identity*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Renier, L. 1858. *Inscriptions romaines de l'Algerie: recueilles et publiees sous les auspices de M. Hippolyte Fortoul ministre de l'instruction publique et des cultes*. Paris: Impremerie Imperiale.

Robinson, A. 2010. *God and the World of Signs*. Leiden: Brill.

Rodgers, B. S. 2012. "Divine Insinuations in the Panegyrici Latini." In *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies: Latin Panegyric,* edited by R. Rees. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 289-334.

Römer, C. 2009. "Manichaeism and Gnosticism in the Papyri." In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology,* edited by R. S. Bagnail. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 623-643.

Rougé, J. 1978. "A propos du manuscrit du 'De mortibus persecutorum.'" In *Lactance et son temps: recherches actuelles: actes du IVe Colloque d'études historiques et patristiques, Chantilly, 21-23 septembre 1976,* edited by J. Fontaine and M. Perrin. Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 21-23.

Rowan, C. 2022. "Theoretical Approaches to Roman Imagery and Iconography." In *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Imagery and Iconography,* edited by L. K. Cline and N. T. Elkins. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 339-357.

Ruge. 2016. "Ravenna Basilica of San Vitale mosaic Justinian." *Wikicommons.* https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ravenna_Basilica_of_San_Vitale_mosaic_Justinian.jpg.

Rüpke, J., and A. Glock. 2008. *Fasti Sacerdotum: A Prosopography of Pagan, Jewish, and Christian Religious Officials in the City of Rome, 300 BC to AD 499.* Translated by D. M. B. Richardson. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Sabbatini Tumolesi, P. 1990. "Una nuova tabula patronatus da Paestum." *Miscellanea Grecae Romana* 14:235-256.

Salama, P. 1998. "Les provinces d'Afrique et les débuts du monogramme constantinien." *BAntFr* 1:137-159.

Salisbury, J. E. 2015. *Rome's Christian Empress: Galla Placidia Rules at the Twilight of the Empire*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Sande, S. 2001. "The Iconography and Style of the Rothschild Cameo." In *Late Antiquity: Art in Context,* edited by J. Fleischer, N. Hannestad, J. Lund, and M. Nielsen. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 145-158.

Schapiro, M. 1970. “On Some Problems in the Semiotics of Visual Art: Field and Vehicle in Image-signs.” In *Sign, Language, Culture,* edited by A. J. Grimes, R. Jakobson, M. R. Mayenowa, S. K. Saumjan, W. Steinitz, and S. Zolkiewski. The Hague: Mouton, 487-502.

Schmidt, T. E. 1995. “The Letter Tau as the Cross: Ornament and Content in Hebrews 2,14.” *Biblica* 76(1):75-84.

Schoolman, E. M. 2017. “Image and Function in ‘Christian’ and ‘Pagan’ Late Antique Terracotta Lamps.” In *Pagans and Christians in the Late Roman Empire; New Evidence, New Approaches (4th–8th centuries)*, edited by M. Sághy and E. M. Schoolman. Budapest: Central European University Press, 165-178.

Schott, J. M. 2008. *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Scrinari, V. S. M. 1991. *Il Laterano Imperiale.* Vol. I, *Dalle aedes Laterani alla domus Faustae*. Vatican: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana.

Sear, D. R. 2002. *Roman Coins and their Values II*. Millennium ed. London: Spink.

Semenenko, A. 2012. *The Texture of Culture: An Introduction to Yuri Lotman’s Semiotic Theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Serrano del Pozo. 2021. “The Constantinian *Labarum* and the Christianization of Roman Military Standards.” *Journal for Late Antique Religion and Culture* 15:37-64.

Ševčenko, N. P. 1979a. “Bottom of Bowl with SS. Peter and Paul Flanking a Column.” In *Age of Spirituality: Late Antiquity and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century; Catalogue of the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, November 19, 1977, through February 12, 1978,* edited by K. Weitzmann. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 570-571.

Ševčenko, N. P. 1979b. “Bowl with SS. Peter and Paul.” In *Age of Spirituality: Late Antiquity and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century; Catalogue of the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, November 19, 1977, through February 12, 1978,* edited by K. Weitzmann. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 569.

Ševčenko, N. P. 1979c. “Fragment of the Bottom of a Bowl with St. Lawrence.” In *Age of Spirituality: Late Antiquity and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century; Catalogue of the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, November 19, 1977, through February 12, 1978,* edited by K. Weitzmann. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 572-573.

Shaw, B. D. 2011. *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shelton, K. J. 1979. “Projecta Casket.” In *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century: Catalogue of the Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, November 19, 1977, through February 12, 1978*, edited by K. Weitzmann. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 330-332.

Shelton, W. B. 2014. “Lactantius as Architect of a Constantinian and Christian "Victory over the Empire."” In *Rethinking Constantine: History, Theology and Legacy*, edited by E. L. Smither. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 26-36.

Sheppard, A. R. R. 1979. “R.E.C.A.M. Notes and Studies No. 6: Jews, Christians and Heretics in Acmonia and Eumeneia.” *AnatSt* 29:169-180.

Simsky, A. 2013, June 9. “Christian gold-glasses from the Vatican museum.” *Andrew Simsky LiveJournal.* https://asimsky.livejournal.com/7005.html.

Sivan, H. 1993. *Ausonius of Bordeaux: Genesis of a Gallic Aristocracy*. London: Routledge.

Smith, R. 1995. *Julian’s Gods: Religion and Philosophy in the Thought and Action of Julian the Apostate.* London: Routledge.

Snyder, G. F. 1985. *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life Before Constantine*. Macon, GA: Mercer.

Spalding-Stracey, G. 2020. *The Cross in the Visual Culture of Late Antique Egypt.* Leiden: Brill.

Spier, J. 2007a. *Late Antique and Early Christian Gems*. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag.

Spier, J., ed. 2007b. *Picturing the Bible: The Earliest Christian Art.* London: Yale University Press.

Squire, M. 2017a. “Optatian and his Lettered Art: A Kaleidoscopic Lens on Late Antiquity.” In *Morphogrammata/ The Lettered Art of Optatian: Figuring Cultural Transformations in the Age of Constantine,* edited by M. Squire and J. Wienand. Paderborn, Germany: Wilhelm Fink, 55-120.

Squire, M. 2017b. “POP Art: The Optical Poetics of Publilius Optatianus Porfyrius.” In *The Poetics of Late Latin Literature,* edited by J. Elsner and J. Hernández Lobato. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 25-99.

Squire, M., and C. Whitton. 2017. “Machina Sacra: Optatian and the Lettered Art of the Christogram.” In *Graphic Signs of Identity, Faith, and Power in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, edited by I. H. Garipzanov, C. Goodson, and H. Maguire. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 45-108.

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. 2022. *Münzkabinett*. https://www.smb.museum/en/museums-institutions/muenzkabinett/home/.

Städele, A. 2003. *Laktans: De Mortibus Persecutorum, Die Todesarten der Verfolger.* Frontes Christiani, 43. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols.

Steiner, A. 2007. *Reading Greek Vases*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stephenson, P. 2009. *Constantine: Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor*. London: Quercus.

Stephenson, P. 2016. *The Serpent Column: A Cultural Biography*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Stern, K. B. 2008. *Inscribing Devotion and Death: Archaeological evidence for Jewish population of North Africa*. Leiden: Brill.

Stevenson, J. 2005. *Women Latin Poets: Language, Gender, and Authority, from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stewart, P. 1999. "The Destruction of Statues in Late Antiquity." In *Constructing Identities in Late Antiquity,* edited by R. Miles. London: Routledge, 159-189.

Stoler, A. L. 2013. *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination*. Durham, England: Duke University Press.

Stoneman, R. 2011. *The Ancient Oracles: Making the Gods Speak.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Strong, D. E. 1966. *Greek and Roman Gold and Silver Plate.* London: Methuen & Co.

Sulzberger, M. 1925. "Le symbole de la croix et les monogrammes de Jésus chez les premiers chrétiens." *Byzantion* 2:337-453.

Swift, E. 2017. *Roman Artefacts and Society: Design, Behaviour, and Experience.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tantillo, I., ed. and trans. 1997. *La prima orazione di Giuliano a Costanzo: introduzione, traduzione e commento*. 10th ed. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.

Tantillo, I. 2017. "Costantino nell'epigrafia delle province africane, con particolare riferimento al periodo successivo alla battaglia di Ponte Milvio." In *Costantino a Milano. L'editto e la sua storia (313-2013),* edited by R. Macchioro. Rome: Biblioteca ambrosiana, 125-150.

Tarasti, E. 2012. *Semiotics of Classical Music: How Mozart, Brahms and Wagner Talk to Us*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Teitler, H. C. 2017. *The Last Pagan Emperor: Julian the Apostate and the War Against Christianity*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Terry, J. H. 1998. "Christian Tomb Mosaics of Late Roman, Vandalic and Byzantine Byzacena." Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri-Columbia.

The British Library Board. n.d. "Digitised Manuscripts." *The British Library.* https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts.

The Collection: Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire. 2022. *Explore Our Collections.* https://www.thecollectionmuseum.com/explore.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 2000-2022. *The Met Collection*. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/the-collection.

The State Hermitage Museum. 1998-2022. *Collection Online*. https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/explore/artworks/?lng=en.

The Trustees of the British Museum. 2022. *The British Museum: Explore the Collection*. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection.

Thomas, C. 1981. *Christianity in Roman Britain to AD 500*. London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd.

Tilghman, B. C. 2011. "The Shape of the Word: Extralinguistic Meaning in Insular Display Lettering," *Word & Image* 27(3):292-398.

Tomaini, T. 2017. *The Corpse as Text: Disinterment and Antiquarian Enquiry, 1700-1900.* Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell and Brewer.

Tomlin, R. S. O. 1998. "Christianity and the Late Roman Army." In *Constantine: History, Historiography, and Legend,* edited by S. N. C. Lieu and D. Montserrat. London: Routledge, 21-51.

Tomlin, R. S. O. 2011. "Writing and Communication." In *Artefacts in Roman Britain: Their Purpose and Use,* edited by L. Allason-Jones. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 133-152.

Tomlin, R. S. O. 2018. *Britannia Romana: Roman Inscriptions and Roman Britain*. Havertown: Oxbow Books, Ltd.

Torjesen, K. J. 1998. "The Early Christian Orans: An Artistic Representation of Women's Liturgical Prayer and Prophecy." In *Women Preachers and Prophets Through Two Millennia of Christianity,* edited by B. M. Kienzle and P. J. Walker. Berkeley: University of California Press, 42-56.

Torres, M. L. 2008. “Christian Burial Practices at Ostia Antica: Backgrounds and Contexts with a Case Study of the Pianabella Basilica.” Ph.D. diss., University of Texas.

Toynbee, J. M. C. 1962. *Art in Roman Britain*. London: Phaidon Press for the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies.

Toynbee, J. M. C. 1964. “A New Roman Mosaic Pavement Found in Dorset.” *JRS* 54(1-2):7-14.

Toynbee, J. M. C. 1971. *Death and Burial in the Roman world*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Trebilco, P. 2004. “The Christian and Jewish Eumeneian Formula.” In *Negotiating Diaspora: Jewish Strategies in the Roman Empire,* edited by J. M. G. Barclay. London, UK: T&T Clark International, 66-89.

Troxell, H. A. 1994. *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum: The Collection of the American Numismatic Society.* Pt. 8*, Macedonia II: Alexander I-Philip II*. New York: The American Numismatic Society.

Tuker, M. A. R. 1897. “Part Two. The Liturgy in Rome: Feasts and Functions of the Church: The Ceremonies of the Holy Week.” In *Handbook to Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome*, edited by M. A. R. Tuker and H. Malleson. London: Adam and Charles Black.

Turner, E. G. 1987. *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World.* Edited by P. J. Parsons. 2nd rev. ed. London: University of London, Institute of Classical Studies.

Ullucci, D. C. 2012. *The Christian Rejection of Animal Sacrifice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Underwood, D. 2015. “Reuse as Archaeology: A Test Case for Late Antique Building Chronologies in Ostia.” In *Field Methods and Post-Excavation Techniques in Late Antique Archaeology,* edited by L. Lavan and M. Mulryan. Leiden: Brill, 383-409.

Uspenskij, B. A., and V. M. Zhivov. 2012. “Tsar and God: Semiotic Aspects of the Sacralization of the Monarch in Russia.” In *"Tsar and God" and Other Essays in Russian Cultural Semiotics,* edited by B. A, Uspenskij and V. M. Zhivov. Translated by M. C. Levitt, D. Budgen, and L. Bliss. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 1-112.

Vagi, D. L. 1999. *Coinage and History of the Roman Empire, c. 82 B.C.--A.D. 480.* Vol. 2, *Coinage*. Sidney, OH: Amos Press.

Van Dam, R. 2007. *The Roman Revolution of Constantine*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Van Dam, R. 2011. *Remembering Constantine at the Milvian Bridge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van Dam, R. 2017. “The Sources for Our Sources: Eusebius and Lactantius on Constantine in 312-313.” In *Constantine: Religious Faith and Imperial Policy,* edited by A. E. Siecienski. London: Routledge, 59-74.

Van Leeuwen, T. 2005. *Introducing Social Semiotics*. London: Routledge.

van Oppen de Ruiter, B. F. 2015. *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellinistic Queenship*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

van Ossel, P. 2006. “Rural Impoverishment in Northern Gaul at the End of Antiquity: The Contribution of Archaeology.” In *Social and Political Life in Late Antiquity*, edited by C. Machado, A. Gutteridge, and W. Bowden. Leiden: Brill, 533-565.

Vanderspoel, J. 1995. *Themistius and the Imperial Court: Oratory, Civic Duty, and Paideia from Constantius to Theodosius*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Vanderspoel, J. 1998. “Julian and the Mithraic Bull.” *Ancient History Bulletin.* 12:113-119.

Veltruský, J. 1976. “Some Aspects of the Pictorial Sign.” In *Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions,* edited by L. Matějka and I. R. Titanic. Cambridge, MA: MIT University Press, 245-264.

Vermaseren, M. J., and C. C. V. Essen. 1965. *The Excavations in the Mithraeum of the Church of Santa Prisca in Rome*. Leiden: Brill.

Vilozny, N. 2012. “The Rising Power of the Image: On Jewish Magic Art from the Second Temple Period to Late Antiquity.” In *Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History?,* edited by D. R. Schwartz and Z. Weiss. Leiden: Brill, 243-276.

Vivaldi, A. 2015. “L’area archeologica del Campo P nella necropoli di S. Pietro in Vaticano: analisi tecnica de Imonumento.” *Rivista di archeologia cristiana* 91:311-358.

Vopel, V. H. 1899. *Die Altchristlichen Goldgläser: ein Beitrag zur Altchristlichen Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte*. Heidelberg, Germany: JCB Mohr.

Watts, D. 1991. *Christians and Pagans in Roman Britain*. London: Routledge.

Watts, E. J. 2015. *The Final Pagan Generation: Rome’s Unexpected Path to Christianity.* Transformation of the Classical Heritage. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Weber, H. n.d. “Apostel Petrus.” *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.* http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=direct/1/ResultDetailView/result.tab.link&sp=10&sp=Scollection&sp=SfilterDefinition&sp=2&sp=2&sp=1&sp=SdetailView&sp=134&sp=Sdetail&sp=0&sp=F&sp=SdetailBlockKey&sp=1.

Weiss, N. A. 2018. *The Music of Tragedy: Performance and Imagination in Euripidean Theater*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Weiss, P. 2003. "The Vision of Constantine." *JRA* 16:237-259.

West, S. A., and J. Plouviez. 1976. "The Roman Site at Icklingham." *East Anglian Archaeology* 3:63-125.

Westrin, T., ed. (1911). *Nordisk Familjebok.* Vol. 12, *Hyperemi-Johan.* Stockholm: Nordisk familjeboksförlag.

Wigg-Wolf, D. 2014. "Constantine's Silver Multiple from Ticinum (RIC 36): 'One Small Step' or 'A Giant Leap'?" In *'Art in the Round.' New Approaches to Ancient Coin Iconography*, edited by N. T. Elkins and S. Krmnicek. Rahden, Germany: VML, Verlag Marie Leidorf, 135-146.

Wienand, J. 2017. "Publilius Optatianus Porfyrius: The Man and his Book." In *Morphogrammata/ The Lettered Art of Optatian: Figuring Cultural Transformations in the Age of Constantine,* edited by M. Squire and J. Wienand. Paderborn, Germany: Wilhelm Fink, 121-164.

Wilhite, D. E. 2017. *Ancient African Christianity*. London: Taylor and Francis.

Wilkinson, R. J. 2015. *Tetragrammaton: Western Christians and the Hebrew Name of God - From the Beginnings to the Seventeenth Century*. Leiden: Brill.

Williams, C. A. 2012. *Reading Roman Friendship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Williams, S., and J. G. P. Friell. 1994. *Theodosius*. London: Batsford.

Wood, J. 2018. *Fantastic Creatures in Mythology and Folklore: From Medieval Times to the Present Day*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Wood, T. 2011. "Beyond Signification: The Co-evolution of Subject and Semiosis." In *Semiotics: Theory and Applications,* edited by S. C. Hamel. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 37-64.

Woodman, A. J. 1988. *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies*. London: Routledge.

Woods, D. 1997. "Eusebius, VC 4.21, and the Notitia Dignitatum." In *Studia Patristica Vol. XXIX. Papers presented at the Twelfth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 1995. Historica, Theologica et Philosophica, Critica et Philologica,* edited by E. A. Livingtone. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 195-202.

Woods, D. 2000. "Julian, Gallienus, and the Solar Bull." *AJN* 12:157-169.

Yarrow, L. M. 2021. *The Roman Republic to 49 BCE: Using Coins as Sources.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Yegül, F. K. 2014. A Victor's Message: The Talking Column of the Temple of Artemis at Sardis. *JSAH* 73(2):204-225.

Zanker, P. 1990. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

APPENDIX A

The following is an appendix of all the main types of reverses found on the imperial coinage issued between the Battle of the Milvian Bridge until the end of the reigns of Arcadius and Honorius. It has been grouped into five major categories (animals; dieties and personifications; imperial family; military; and miscellaneous), each of which has been ordered alphabetically. A brief description, as well as any legends, authorities, mints and denominations under which the type was minted, is given. It is important to note that not all of the minor variations were minted for each different legend, authority, mint or denomination. For example, Type A1 was issued with the legend PRINCIPIS PROVIDENTISSIMI on *solidi* in Arles, but with the legend SAPIENTIA PRINCIPIS on bronze coins from Rome. Minor variants are mentioned below the description of the main type.

The typology is further indexed by the emperor under which it was first introduced (for example, Constantine = Type A's; Constantius = Type B's, etc.). If a type was introduced by two emperor's at the same time (ex. Valens in the East and Valentinian I in the West), it was assigned to the senior emperor. Each type was then given a numeric value based on its alphabetic rank in each category.

LEGEND

Constantine I	A
Constantius II	B
Constans	C
Constantine II	D
Julian	E
Jovian	F
Valentinian I	G
Valens	H
Gratian	I
Valentinian II	J
Theodosius I	K
Arcadius	L
Honorius	M

A1. ANIMALS

Type A1 Bird (owl?) standing on an altar; a spear lies across (or to the right) of the altar and the altar is flanked by a shield and a helmet
• sometimes the altar is inscribed 'SAPIENTIA'

Legend	SAPIENT(IA) PRINCIP(IS); PRINCIPIS PROVIDENTISSIMI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Arles; Rome; Trier
Denomination	*solidus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 1-3; Rome 17; Trier 62-65

Type E1 Bull standing below two stars
• sometimes an eagle, holding a wreath in its beak, stands in the right field on another wreath

Legend	SECVRITAS REI PVB
Authority	Julian
Mint	Antioch; Arles; Aquileia; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica
Denomination	Æ1
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 216-218; Arles 313-323; Aquileia 242-243; Constantinople 161-164; Cyzicus 125-128; Heraclea 101-104; Lyons 236-238; Nicomedia 118-122; Sirmium 105-107; Siscia 411-413 and 417-419; Thessalonica 222-226

Type A2 Eagle

Legend	MEMORIAE AETERNAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Rome
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Rome 110-119

Type A3 Eagle carrying the emperor Licinius, who holds a thunderbolt and sceptre

Legend	IOVI CONSERVATORI AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum, Trier
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 88-89; Trier 210-212

Type A4 Lion; above, a club

Legend	MEMORIAE AETERNAE; VIRTVS AVGVSTI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Arles; Rome
Denomination	*solidus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 4-6; Rome 120-128

Type B1 Phoenix standing on a globe (or a rocky mound)

Legend	FEL TEMP REPARATIO; PERPETVETAS
Authority	Constantius II; Constans; Gratian
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Trier
Denomination	*siliqua*; Æ2 (small); Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Alexandria 71; Antioch 129-131 and 137; Aquileia 110-112; Arles 109-115; Constantinople 93-94; Cyzicus 88-91; Heraclea 79-80; Lyons 90-94; Nicomedia 73; Rome 141-145; Sirmium 26-27; Siscia 227-228, 231-232, 235-236, 240-242, 247 and 249; Trier 226-237 *RIC IX* Trier 56

Type A5 She-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus; above, two stars

Legend	no legend
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Alexandria 63, 70; Antioch 91, 113; Aquileia 122, 128, 136; Arles 343, 351, 356, 362, 368, 373, 379, 385, 392, 400, 407, 415; Constantinople 62, 78, 85; Cyzicus 71-72, 90-91, 105-106, 118-119; Heraclea 144, 119, 124, 129, 134, 143; Lyons 242, 247, 252, 257, 260, 267, 270, 275; Nicomedia 195; Rome 331, 338, 354, 370, 386, 390, 396, 398, 406, 408; Siscia 222-223, 240; Thessalonica 187, 229; Trier 522, 529, 542, 547, 553, 561, 562 *RIC VIII* Alexandria 8, 10, 16, 26; Arles 8, 15, 25, 30, 38; Rome 17, 29, 39, 55; Trier 66

A2. Deities and Personifications

Type B2 Aequitas, standing, holding a balance
• sometimes she also holds a sceptre or a scroll

Legend	IVST VEN MEM
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Nicomedia
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Alexandria 68; Antioch 64; Constantinople 62; Cyzicus 35; Heraclea 41; Nicomedia 45

Type A6 Alamannia, seated on the ground, resting her head on one hand with her other hand in her lap; behind her, a trophy; in exergue, ALAMANNIA

Legend	GAVDIVM ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	*solidus*; gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 237-239, 243, 362, 516, 535

Type A7 Concordia, seated on a throne, holding a caduceus and a cornucopia

Legend	CONCORDIA AVGG NN
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Cyzicus; Nicomedia; Sirmium; Ticinum
Denomination	*solidus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 50; Aquileia 11-13, 116; Cyzicus 20; Nicomedia 59-62; Sirmium 38-39; Ticinum 101-103

Type F1 Constantinopolis, seated on a throne, extending her hand towards a suppliant, who brings her offerings. She holds a sceptre in her other hand and a shield rests beside the throne. Victory stands behind them holding a wreath and a palm

Legend	GAVDIVM ROMANORVM
Authority	Jovian
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Constantinople 168

Type A8 Constantinopolis (or Tyche), seated on a throne, holding a cornucopia and placing her feet on a prow.
Legend in field

Legend	D N CONSTANTINVS MAX TRIVMF AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 53

Type B3 Constantinopolis, seated on a throne, holding a sceptre (or a spear) and Victory on a globe (or a globe without Victory; or a cornucopia)
• sometimes there is a star in the left field
• sometimes there is a prow beneath Constantinopolis' foot
• sometimes Victory holds a wreath and a palm
• sometimes the throne is adorned with lions' heads
• sometimes Constantinopolis' hand is resting on her knee rather than holding anything

Legend	CONCORDIA AVGG(G); GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantius II; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Arcadius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; *siliqua*; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 69-71, 157-160; Nicomedia 99; Rome 285-286; Sirmium 54; Thessalonica 141 *RIC IX* Alexandria 11; Antioch 44, 47-48; Aquileia 25, 33; Arles 21; Constantinople 43-46, 56-58, 65, 67, 69; Cyzicus 16; Lyons 24; Nicomedia 29, 31-32; Rome 45, 47; Thessalonica 38, 40, 50, 64; Trier 55, 66, 67, 72 *RIC X* Arcadius 7-9, 24-27, 31, 37-44, 85-100

Type J1 Constantinopolis, seated on a throne with her foot on a prow, holding a sceptre and a shield inscribed with *vota;* the shield rests on a cippus
• sometimes she is not holding a sceptre
• sometimes the shield rests on a prow instead of a cippus

Legend	CONCORDIA AVGGGθ; CONCORDIA AVGGG
Authority	Valentinian II
Mint	Aquileia; Milan; Thessalonica
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC IX* Aquileia 39; Milan 7; Thessalonica 51-54

Type A9 Euphratides, reclining, leaning on a sceptre; beside him, there is an urn; behind him, there are reeds

Legend	SECVRITAS PVBLICA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 145-148

Type A10 Euphratides, reclining, leaning on a water jug. He holds a fish and a rudder; behind him, reeds

Legend	FELICITAS PVBLICA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 100

Type A11 Female, leaning on a column, holding a laurel and a sceptre

Legend	GLORIA EXERCITVS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople; Thessalonica
Denomination	silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 57, 129-130, 133-134; Thessalonica 196, 219, 200

Type A12 Female, standing on a prow, holding a cornucopia. She is being received by Arles, who is holding a sceptre

Legend	PROVIDENTIAE AVGG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Arles
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 30-32

Type A13 Fides, seated on a throne, holding an eagle; on either side of her, a standard

Legend	FIDES EXERCTVS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 27; Trier 13-14

Type A14 Fortuna, seated on a throne, holding a rudder and a cornucopia

Legend	FORTVNAE REDVCI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 51

Type A15 Four children, standing and facing each other, holding the attributes of the four seasons; in exergue, TEMPORA

Legend	FELICIA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Aquileia; Ticinum
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 31; Ticinum 41-42

Type A16 Francia seated on the ground; behind her, a trophy with spearheads, a bow, and a shield; in exergue, FRANCIA

Legend	GAVDIVM ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Siscia; Trier
Denomination	gold fraction; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Siscia 23; Trier 240-241, 363, 365-366

Type A17 Genius, standing, holding a patera (or, rarely, a globe) and a cornucopia

Legend	GENIO POP ROM; GENIVM PR
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Arles; London; Lyons; Rome; Trier
Denomination	silver (uncertain); Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 52-54, 78; London 3, 22-23, 30-31, 36-42, 50-52, 64-67, 85-87; Lyons 48-50; Rome 276; Trier 56-60, 84-85, 119-123

Type A18 Jupiter, standing, holding a thunderbolt and leaning on a sceptre
• sometimes Jupiter holds Victory on a globe rather than a thunderbolt
• sometimes there is an eagle holding a wreath to the left

Legend	IOVI CONSERVATORI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Aquileia; Arles; Rome; Ticinum; Thessalonica
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 6-8; Arles 123-128, 142, 159-160, 167; Rome 86, 99, 100-101, 131-133; Ticinum 70--72; Thessalonica 19

Type A19 Liberalitas, standing, holding an accountant board and a cornucopia

Legend	LIBERALITAS XI IMP IIII COS P P P
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 53

Type A20 Pax, standing, holding a branch and a sceptre (or a spear)
• sometimes she leans on a column

Legend	no legend; PAX AETERNA AVG; PAX PERPETVA; PAX PVBLICA
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II
Mint	Constantinople; Rome; Siscia; Trier
Denomination	heavy *miliarense*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Rome 143-145 *RIC VIII* Constantinople 33-35, 38, 48-49; Rome 27, 53, 105-106; Siscia 46a; Trier 42, 47, 55, 63-64, 78, 90

Type B4 Pietas, standing, carrying an infant at her breast

Legend	PIETAS ROMANA
Authority	Constantius II; Constans
Mint	Constantinople; Rome; Trier
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Constantinople 36, 50-51; Rome 28, 54; Trier 43, 48, 56, 65, 79, 91

Type M1 Roma and Constantinopolis (?), seated on cuirasses, supporting a shield inscribed with v*ota; there is* a palm between them

Legend	no legend
Authority	Honorius
Mint	Ravenna
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC X* Honorius 1331-1332

Type B5 Roma and Constantinopolis, seated on thrones, each holding Victory on a globe and a sceptre; Constantinopolis rests her foot on a prow; Victory crowns them
• sometimes Constantinopolis holds a cornucopia instead of a sceptre
• sometimes Roma holds a spear instead of a sceptre

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM; VIRTVS EXERCITVS
Authority	Constantius II; Valentinian I; Gratian
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Milan; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 72-73, 161; Arles 231-232; Thessalonica 139, 142-143 *RIC IX* Aquileia 19; Milan 4; Trier 10-11; 35-36

Type B6 Roma and Constantinopolis, seated on thrones, supporting a shield (or a wreath) inscribed with v*ota;* Roma holds a spear; Constantinopolis holds a sceptre and her right foot is on a prow
• sometimes there is an eagle on a wreath
• sometimes Constantinoplis holds a cornucopia instead of a sceptre
• sometimes the shield/wreath is supported by a column
• sometimes the shield/wreath is inscribed with a star instead of *vota*
• sometimes Constantinopolis also holds Victory on globe with sceptre
• sometimes both Roma and Constantinopolis hold sceptres
• sometimes there is a captive between Roma and Constantinopolis

Legend	GLORIA REI PVBLICAE; GLORIA R℞OMANORVM; GLORIA REIPVBLICAE; GLORIA ROMANORVM; SECVRITAS REI PVBLICAE
Authority	Constantius II; Julian; Jovian; Valentinian I; Valens; Valentinian II
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 81-91, 162-173, 222-224; Aquileia 179-181, 210, 246; Arles 225-226, 233-239, 280-287, 327; Constantinople 57, 95-98, 129, 169-170; Cyzicus 38-39; Heraclea 81; Lyons 177-179, 205-206, 240; Nicomedia 29-34, 74-75, 100, 126; Rome 225-230, 232-233, 289-298, 331, 421; Sirmium 1-9, 55-65, 113-116; Siscia 297-298, 320-322, 357-359; Thessalonica 147-154, 193-198, 230-233; Trier 338-347, 362 *RIC IX* Antioch 15-16; Constantinople 23; Nicomedia 13; Rome 60-61; Trier 12

Type A21 Roma, seated on a cuirass (or a shield; or a throne), holding a spear (or a sceptre) and a globe

- sometimes Roma's foot rests on a prow
- sometimes globe topped by Victory
- sometimes throne is decorated with lion heads
- sometimes a chi-rho surmounts the globe

Legend	CONCORDIA AVGGG; CONSTANTINVS CAES; GLORIA ROMANORVM; ROMAE AETERNAE; VICTORIA AAVGGG; VIRTVS ROMANORVM; VRBS ROMA
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Valentinian I; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Honorius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Milan; Nicomedia; Ravenna; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; *siliqua*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 4, 17, 23-24; Rome 409-410 *RIC VIII* Antioch 1, 74; Rome 166-167, 201-203, 206-208; Trier 272-274 *RIC IX* Alexandria 9-10; Antioch 45-46, 50-51; Aquileia 15, 28, 31-32, 35, 41, 44; Arles 23; Cyzicus 17-18; Heraclea 14-16; Lyons 9, 27, 43, 46; Milan 12, 32; Nicomedia 30, 33-34; Rome 11, 22, 26, 35, 37, 42, 46, 49, 53; Sirmium 11; Siscia 20; Thessalonica 39, 42; Trier 27, 37-38, 45, 46, 58, 64, 71, 94-95, 106 *RIC X* Honorius 1228, 1241-1242, 1255, 1266-1267, 1296-1297, 1345, 1353, 1360, 1364

Type A22 Roma, seated on a cuirass, receiving a branch from Virtus, who also holds a club; behind them, Victory

Legend	VIRTVS AVGG NN
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 100

Type A23 Roma, seated on a shield, holding a shield in her lap inscribed with v*ota*

Legend	ROMAE AETERNAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Rome
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Rome 146-157

Type K1 Roma, standing, holding a trophy and Victory on globe; a shield leans against her

Legend	VRBS ROMA FELIX
Authority	Theodosius I; Honorius
Mint	Aquileia; Rome
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC IX* Rome 67-68 *RIC X* Honorius 1243, 1271-1283

Type A24 Salus (or Spes; or Empress), standing and veiled, holding two children in her arms

Legend	SALVS REIPVBLICAE; SPES REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; London; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Alexandria 39-40; Antioch 68-69, 76-77; Arles 277, 298; Constantinople 12; Cyzicus 29, 40, 50; Heraclea 80, 86; London 300; Lyons 235; Nicomedia 69A, 77-78, 96-97, 130-131, 149-150; Rome 271, 292-294; Sirmium 55, 61; Siscia 188, 197, 205; Thessalonica 137, 160-162; Ticinum 178, 182, 191, 203-204; Trier 459-460, 466, 483-484

Type C1 Securitas, standing, holding a sceptre and leaning her elbow on a column

Legend	SECVRITAS REI PVB
Authority	Constans
Mint	Rome
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Rome 6-13, 15-16, 22-23, 33-35, 44-46

Type A25 Securitas, standing, holding a spear and offering Victory on a globe to Respublica; in exergue, two animals

Legend	SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 2

Type A26 Securitas (or Spes; or Empress), standing, lowering a branch with one hand and raising her robe with the other

Legend	SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE; SECVRITAS REIPVBLICE; SPES REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; London; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Alexandria 38, 44, 48, 53, 57; Antioch 67, 75, 80, 82; Arles 278-279, 285, 299-300, 307-308, 317, 324, 340; Constantinople 11; Cyzicus 28, 39, 49, 54; Heraclea 79, 85, 89, 95, 109-110; London 299; Lyons 234; Nicomedia 79-80, 95, 129, 148, 159; Rome 270, 291; Sirmium 54, 60; Siscia 187, 196, 204; Thessalonica 134, 149, 159; Ticinum 177, 183, 190, 202, 209; Trier 458, 465, 481-482, 508, 515

Type A27 Securitas, standing, placing one hand on her head and other hand on a column

Legend	SECURITAS REI PVBLICAE; SECVRITAS REIPVB(LICAE)
Authority	Constantine I; Constantine II
Mint	Rome; Siscia; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; *nine-siliqua* piece; *semissis*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Rome 299, 402-404; Siscia 218; Trier 184, 189, 246-248, 502, 577 *RIC VIII* Trier 1-3, 16-19

Type A28 Sol, standing amid a plan of a Roman camp, raising one hand and holding a globe in the other

Legend	VIRT EXERC
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Thessalonica
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Thessalonica 66-71

Type A29 Sol, standing in a quadriga, raising one hand and holding a globe and whip in the other

Legend	SOLI INVICTO COMITI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	London
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* London 81-84

Type A30 Sol, standing, raising one hand and holding a whip (or a globe; or both) in the other
- sometimes he holds neither the globe nor the whip
- sometimes Victory is on the globe
- sometimes there is a captive at his feet

Legend	CLARITAS REIPVB(LICAE); SOLI INVICTO COMITI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Aquileia; Arles; London; Lyons; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 1-5, 14-20; Arles 14-22, 35-47, 56-68, 71-77, 79-105, 108-112, 118-122, 136-141, 144-158, 164-166, 169-171, 180-182, 184; London 5-20, 27-29, 32-35, 43-49, 53-63, 68-80, 88-104, 106-131, 137-153; Lyons 1-9, 15-27, 30-47, 51-62; Rome 1-5, 18-24, 27-43, 45-59, 78-85, 97-98, 129-130, 136; Siscia 24, 31-38; Thessalonica 8-9, 23; Ticinum 1-4, 7-10, 14-17, 20-22, 43-46, 61-64, 66-69, 79-81; Trier 39-48, 70-76, 92-107, 127-137, 146-168, 175-183

Type A31 Three Monetae, standing, holding balances and cornucopiae

Legend	MONETA AVGG ET CAESS NN; VBERTAS SAECVLI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Aquileia; Trier
Denomination	silver (uncertain); Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 32; Trier 336

Type A32 Two Genii, standing, carrying a garland

Legend	GAVDIVM AVGVSTI NOSTRI; VOTIS DECENN D N CONSTANTINI CAES
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople; Nicomedia; Thessalonica
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 64, 87; Nicomedia 161; Thessalonica 165

Type C2 Two Genii, standing, holding a wreath inscribed with v*ota*

Legend	FELICIA DECENNALIA; GAVDIVM POPVLI ROMANI
Authority	Constans
Mint	Siscia; Thessalonica
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Siscia 105; Thessalonica 60

Type A33 Two Victories, standing, each holding a wreath and a palm
• sometimes there is a standard between them

Legend	AVGGQ NN; GLORIA PERPET; VICTORIA AVG; VICTORIAE DD AVGGQ NN
Authority	Constantine I; Constans; Valentinian II
Mint	Aquileia; Arles; Lyons; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3; Æ4
Reference	*RIC VII* Rome 14-15; Trier 66-67 *RIC VIII* Aquileia 76-93; Arles 72-98; Lyons 38-68; Rome 72-102; Siscia 182-196; Thessalonica 99-106; Trier 180-211 *RIC IX* Aquileia 47; Rome 57; Thessalonica 63

Type A34 Two Victories, standing, holding between them a wreath (or a shield) inscribed with v*ota*
• sometimes the shield is supported by an altar; or a column; or a kneeling barbarian
• sometimes the Victories also hold palm-branches

Legend	CONSTANTINI AVG; CONSTANTINI CAES; GLORIA CONSTANTINI AVG; OB VICTORIAM TRIVMFALEM; VICT(ORIA(E)) D(D(D)) N(N(N)) AVG(G(G)) (ET CAES); VICTORIAE LAETAE AVGG N(N); VICTORIAE LAET(AE) PRINC PERP; VICTORIAS AVGVSTORVM
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II; Valentinian I; Valens
Mint	Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; London; Lyons; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; *semissis*; light *miliarense*; *argenteus*(?);Æ2; *Æ*2 (small); Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 185-195, 198-201; London 154-182; Lyons 63-90; Sirmium 20; Siscia 47-108; Thessalonica 7; Ticinum 25, 82-87, 90-95; Trier 209, 213-236, 492, 571 *RIC VIII* Aquileia 6-7, 36-39, 43, 45-46, 52a, 53-56; Rome 251-253; Siscia 26-27, 107-126, 128-143, 259; Thessalonica 14-15, 30-31, 62-63, 69-75; Trier 15, 124, 128-138, 164-168, 328 *RIC IX* Constantinople 10; Rome 9

Type A35 Ubertas, standing, holding a balance and a cornucopia

Legend	VBERTAS SAECVLI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 335

Type A36 Victory, seated on a cippus, holding a palm in each hand; before her, there is a trophy and a captive; the captive is being spurned by Victory

Legend	CONSTANTINIANA DAFNE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	*solidus*; silver (uncertain); Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 29-38

Type A37 Victory, seated on a cuirass (and/or a shield; or a throne), holding a shield inscribed with v*ota*

- sometimes the shield is inscribed with a chi-rho
- sometimes the shield is supported on her knee, a column, or a Genius
- sometimes there is a trophy before her with one or two captives
- sometimes there is another shield behind her

Legend	GAVDIVM POPVLI ROMANI; GLORIA PERPETVA AVG N; NOVA SPES RES PVBLICAE; PAX PERPETVA; SALVS REI PVBLICAE; VICTORE AVG N (VOTIS) (X);; VICTORIA AETERNA AVG N; VICTORIA AVG(GG); VICTORIA AVGVSTI; VICTORIA AVGVSTORM (sic); VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM; VICTORIA CONSTANTI AVG; VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG; VICTORIA CRISPI CAES; VICTORIA(E) D(D)(D) N(N)(N) AVG(USTI); VICTORIA IVLIANI NOB CAES; VICTORIA ROMANORVM; VICTORIAE PERPETVAE; VICTORIB AVGG ET CAESS (NN); VICTORIBVS AVGG NN VOTIS X ET XX
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Julian; Jovian; Valentinian I; Valens; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Arcadius; Honorius
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Milan; Nicomedia; Ravenna; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; gold fraction; 1 1/2 *scripulum*; *solidus*; *nine-siliqua* piece; *semissis*; *tremissis*; heavy *miliarense*; light *miliarense*; Æ2; Æ3; Æ4
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 37-38, 130; Arles 70; Constantinople 51-52, 72, 107-108, 116-120; Cyzicus 22-23; Nicomedia 63-65, 103, 107, 171-172, 175-180, 185; Rome 273-274; Sirmium 9-13, 23-27, 32-34, 66; Siscia 242-244, 257-258; Thessalonica 6, 140, 179; Ticinum 40, 50, 58, 109-110, 197; Trier 8, 86-88 *RIC VIII* Antioch 9-29, 92-101, 174-180, 207-209; Aquileia 4-5, 41, 44, 50-52, 57-57a, 61-63, 143-145; Arles 160, 240-242, 288; Constantinople 3-10, 99, 130, 171; Heraclea 2-10; Nicomedia 1-2, 35-36, 101-102; Rome 299-300, 370-371, 373-374, 381-382; Siscia 1-4, 12-13, 23-25, 28-31, 33-38; Thessalonica 64-68, 155-157, 199-200, 220; Trier 125 *RIC IX* Antioch 3, 21-22, 24-26, 39, 43, 61; Constantinople 26-28, 30, 48-50, 55, 61, 72, 74; Heraclea 13, 17, 23; Milan 22; Nicomedia 28, 36, 42; Siscia 34-35; Thessalonica 5, 20, 23, 46-47; Trier 19-20, 92 *RIC X* Arcadius 10-17, 22-23, 28-29, 32-33, 101-105; Honorius 1210-1213, 1256-1257, 1288-1289, 1312, 1333-1337

Type A38 Victory, seated on a throne near a shield, holding Victory (sometimes on a globe) and a cornucopia

Legend	CONSTANTINVS AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Nicomedia; Sirmium; Thessalonica; Ticinum
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 70; Sirmium 56; Thessalonica 131; Ticinum 179

Type A39 Victory, standing, holding a shield inscribed with *vota* and spurning a captive

Legend	VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG; VICTORIA CONSTANTIS AVG; VICTORIA DDD NNN AVG
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans
Mint	Heraclea; Siscia
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Siscia 244
	RIC VIII Heraclea 2-3; Siscia 3-4, 13

Type A40 Victory, standing, holding a shield inscribed with v*ota* with both hands

Legend	VICTORIBVS AVGG NN VOTIS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; gold fraction
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 9-10, 38

Type A41 Victory, standing, holding a standard in both hands

Legend	VICTORIA NOB CAESS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Rome
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Rome 340-341

Type J2 Victory, standing, holding a wreath and a cross on a globe
• sometimes there is also a globe under her foot

Legend	VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM
Authority	Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Arcadius; Honorius
Mint	Constantinople; Milan; Ravenna; Rome
Denomination	*tremissis*
Reference	*RIC IX* Constantinople 75; Milan 11, 23, 37
	RIC X Arcadius 19-20, 34-36; Honorius 1214-1215, 1258-1259, 1290-1291

Type A42 Victory, standing, holding a wreath (or a trophy) and a palm (or a trophy; or a wreath)

- sometimes the trophy is on a long staff (or on a spear)
- sometimes she only holds a wreath
- sometimes she spurns a captive
- sometimes captives sit on either side of her
- sometimes there is v*ota* in the field

Legend	CONSTANS NOB CAESAR; CONSTANTINVS AVG; CONSTANTINVS CAESAR; CONSTANTIVS CAESAR; CRISPVS CAESAR; FELICITAS PERPETVA; FELICITAS PERPETVS; FELICITAS ROMANORVM; GLORIA ROMANORVM; no legend; PAX PERPETVA; SALVS REI PVBLICAE; SARMATIA DEVICTA; SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE; SPES ROMANORVM; VICT AVG(G); VICTORIA AGVSTI (sic); VICTORIA AVG(G)(G) (NN); VICTORIA AVG ET CAESS NN; VICTORIA AVGVSTE; VICTORIA AVGVSTI; VICTORIA AVGVSTI N; VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM; VICTORIA CAESS (NN); VICTORIA CAESAR NN; VICTORIA CAESARIS; VICTORIA CAESARVM; VICTORIA CONSTANTI(NI) AVG; VICTORIA D(D) N(N) AVG(G); VICTORIA DN AVG; VICTORIAE LIBERAE; VICTORIA PERPETV; VICTORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Julian; Jovian; Valentinian I; Valens; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Arcadius; Honorius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; London; Lyons; Milan; Nicomedia; Ravenna; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; gold fraction; *aureus*; *solidus*; 1 1/2 *scripulum*; *nine-siliqua* piece; *argenteus*(?); *semissis*; *tremissis*; light *miliarense*; *siliqua*; reduced *siliqua*; *half-siliqua*; reduced *half-siliqua*; silver (uncertain); Æ2; Æ3; Æ4
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 83, 93, 96-107; Arles 257-258; Constantinople 2-3, 5, 46-50, 54, 68-71, 90-98, 114-115, 126-128, 136; Cyzicus 75; Heraclea 101-102, 145-147; London 289-290; Lyons 209, 212, 214, 219, 222; Nicomedia 56, 110-113, 117, 139-141, 186; Rome 140, 373-375, 377-378; Sirmium 35-36, 48-52, 63-65; Siscia 28, 210, 212-213, 225, 229-230, 233-234, 248-250; Thessalonica 13-14, 59-65, 147-148, 152, 168, 173-175, 177-178, 181-182, 189, 194, 205, 208, 214-217; Ticinum 34, 193-196; Trier 32-33, 66-67, 190-191, 337-338, 429, 435-438, 498-499 *RIC VIII* Alexandria 29-31; Antioch 3-8, 65-67; Aquileia 8-9, 40, 64-73; Arles 60, 62-71; Constantinople 2, 15-20, 63-66; Cyzicus 1-2, 36-37; Heraclea 11-12, 42-43; Lyons 34-37, 210-215a; Nicomedia 3, 46-47; Rome 1, 19-20, 31, 41-42, 56, 64-70, 103, 231, 240-242, 247-248, 301, 325-326, 335, 419-420, 426, 431-433, 444, 453; Siscia 8, 32, 39, 53-59, 127, 144, 155-178, 299, 313-317, 410; Sirmium 25; Thessalonica 2-6, 11-13, 25-29, 36-37, 39-41, 53-54, 93-98, 162; Trier 25-29, 122-123, 139-143, 175-179, 366 *RIC IX* Alexandria 3, 5, 15b, 16; Antioch 12, 36, 49; Aquileia 9, 12, 16, 18, 22, 26-27, 34, 46, 57, 59; Arles 9, 17, 19, 22, 30; Constantinople 6-7, 21-22, 42; Cyzicus 11, 13; Heraclea 5, 10; Lyons 2, 7, 12-13, 21, 23, 25, 39, 44, 47; Milan 6, 10, 33, 38-39; Nicomedia 3, 12; Rome 3-5, 17, 21, 24, 28-31, 36, 39-40, 48, 56, 66; Sirmium 7; Siscia 7, 15, 17, 22, 39; Thessalonica 6, 18, 24, 27, 32, 35; Trier 6-7, 21, 28, 31-32, 40, 43, 47, 54, 57, 70, 97-98, 107-108 *RIC X* Arcadius 6; Honorius 1203-1204, 1230-1236, 1244, 1268-1270, 1285, 1298-1307

Type B7 Victory, standing, holding a wreath and a shield that is inscribed with v*ota*
• sometimes the shield is on a staff
• sometimes Victory is flanked by captives

Legend	VICTORIA AVGVSTI; VICTORIA DN AVG
Authority	Constantius II; Valens
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	heavy *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Constantinople 132
	RIC IX Constantinople 31

Type B8 Victory, standing, holding a wreath inscribed with v*ota* and a trophy and a palm; before her, there is a captive

Legend	VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Antioch; Constantinople; Nicomedia
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 79; Constantinople 55; Nicomedia 26-28

Type A43 Victory, standing in a quadriga, holding a wreath and a palm

Legend	VICTORIBVS AVGG NN VOTIS X ET XX
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 6-7

Type A44 Victory, standing on a galley, holding a wreath in both hands

Legend	LIBERTAS PVBLICA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 18, 25

Type A45 Victory, standing on a prow, holding a spear (or a sceptre) and a shield

Legend	no legend
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Alexandria 64, 71; Antioch 92, 114; Aquileia 123, 129, 137; Arles 344, 352, 357, 363, 369, 374, 380, 386, 393, 401, 408, 416; Constantinople 63, 79, 86; Cyzicus 73-74, 92-93, 107-108, 120-121; Heraclea 115, 120, 125, 130, 135, 144; Lyons 241, 246, 251, 256, 259, 266, 273-274, 279; Nicomedia 196; Rome 332-334, 339, 355, 371, 387, 397, 407; Siscia 224, 241; Thessalonica 188, 230; Trier 523-524, 530, 543, 548, 554, 563, 589 *RIC VIII* Alexandria 9, 11, 17, 27; Antioch 38, 55a; Arles 9, 16, 26-27, 31, 39; Rome 18-20, 30, 40-41; Trier 67, 92

Type A46 Victory, standing with her foot on a globe (or a helmet), inscribing *vota* on a shield that is supported by a column

- sometimes she holds the shield
- sometimes the shield is supported by Genius (or a kneeling figure; or a palm tree)

Legend	FEL TEMP REPARATIO; GLORIA REI PVBLICAE; VICTORIA AVGG (NN); VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM; VICTORIA D N AVGUSTI; VICTORIAE DD NN AVGG
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Valentinian I; Gratian
Mint	Arles; Lyons; Rome; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *aureus*; light *miliarense*; *siliqua*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Lyons 28 *RIC VIII* Arles 230; Rome 59-63; Trier 126-127 *RIC IX* Arles 13; Lyons 18; Rome 8, 44; Thessalonica 21; Trier 9, 24-25

A3. Imperial Family (Caesar, Emperor, Empress)

Type A47 Busts of two Caesars, facing each other

Legend	CRISPVS ET CONSTANTINVS CC; CRISPVS ET CONSTANTINVS IVN NOBB CAESS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Sirmium; Siscia
Denomination	gold multiple; silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Sirmium 14; Siscia 26

Type A48 Busts of two Caesars, facing each other; together they are holding Victory on a globe

Legend	NOBB CAESS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople; Thessalonica
Denomination	silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 6; Thessalonica 180

Type A49 Caesar, standing, holding a globe and a sceptre; he is being crowned by Jupiter, who holds a thunderbolt

Legend	IOVI CONSERVATORI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 97

Type A50 Caesar, standing, holding a spear and a globe; he is placing his foot on a suppliant, who is raising their hands; in exergue, SARMATIA

Legend	PRINCIPIA IVVENTVTIS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 358-361, 446, 532-533, 536

Type A51 Emperor and his two sons leaning on sceptres; the emperor, in the middle, is being crowned by a heavenly hand; the son to the left is being crowned by a soldier; the son to the right is being crowned by Victory

Legend	GAVDIVM ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 42

Type B9 Emperor on a horse; a turreted figure bows towards him, she is extending a garment and holding a torch (?)

Legend	GLORIA REI PVBLICAE; GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantius II; Valens
Mint	Antioch
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 80
	RIC IX Antioch 37-38

Type A52 Emperor, on a horse, raising his hand

Legend	ADVENTVS AVG N; ADVENTVS D N AVG; EQVES ROMANVS; EQVIS ROMANVS; FELIX ADVENTVS AVG M; FELIX ADVENTVS AVG N; FELIX ADVENTVS AVGGG; GLORIA REI PVBLICAE; GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Valentinian I; Valens; Gratian; Theodosius I; Honorius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Lyons; Milan; Nicomedia; Rome; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 99-100; Thessalonica 145
	RIC VIII Antioch 2, 76; Arles 227-229; Rome 287-288; Thessalonica 144
	RIC IX Alexandria 22; Antioch 14, 18, 69; Aquileia 1; Constantinople 89; Cyzicus 29; Lyons 37; Milan 1; Nicomedia 47; Trier 8, 33-34
	RIC X Honorius 1202, 1374

Type B10 Emperor, on a horse, raising his hand; there is a coiled serpent beneath the horse

Legend	DEBELLATOR HOSTIVM
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Milan
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Milan 1

Type A53 Emperor (or Caesar), on a horse, raising one hand and holding a spear (or a sceptre, sometimes eagle-tipped) in his other hand

Legend	ADVENTVS AVG N; ADVENTVS AVGVSTI N; FELIX ADVENTVS AVG N; FELIX ADVENTVS CAESS NN
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Constantinople; London; Nicomedia; Sirmium; Siscia
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; *aureus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 48; Aquileia 27; Constantinople 1, 41; London 1-2, 21; Nicomedia 52, 58; Sirmium 19; Siscia 27

Type A54 Emperor (or Caesar), on a horse, thrusting a spear at one (or two) enemies and holding a shield; another enemy is being trampled by his horse
• sometimes he is charging two (or three) enemies and he is not holding a shield
• sometimes he is not holding a shield

Legend	FEL TEMP REPARATIO; VIRTVS AVGG; VIRTVS AVGVSTI (N); VIRTVS CAESARI N(N); VRITVS AVGVSTORVM NN
Authority	Constantine I; Constans
Mint	Nicomedia; Rome; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; Æ2 (small); Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 84-85, 104; Thessalonica 136; Trier 11, 34-37, 503 *RIC VIII* Rome 103, 153-155

Type A55 Emperor, on a horse, raising his hand; Victory leads him, holding a wreath and a branch

Legend	ADVENTVS AVG N
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Nicomedia
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 160

Type A56 Emperor, seated on a cuirass and a shield, holding zodiac and leaning on a sceptre
• sometimes he is being crowned by Victory (with legend RECTOR TOTIVS ORBIS)

Legend	RECTOR TOTIVS ORBIS; RESTITVTOR LIBERTATIS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 39, 54-55

Type A57 Emperor, seated on a cuirass, receiving a globe from Victory; there is a helmet on the ground

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 96

Type A58 Emperor, seated on a cuirass, receiving Victory on a globe from a turreted female figure; a second Victory, standing behind, crowns the Emperor

Legend	SALVS ET SPES REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople; Heraclea
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 43; Heraclea 99

Type A59 Emperor, seated on a cuirass with a shield behind it, receiving Victory on a globe from a soldier

Legend	RECVPERATORI VRB SVAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Arles
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 13, 33-34

Type A60 Emperor (or Caesar), seated on a curule chair, holding a sceptre and a globe
• sometimes he is holding sceptre and raising his other hand

Legend	P M TRIB P COS IIII P P PROCOS; P M TRIB P COS VI P P PROCOS; PRINCIPIA IVVENTVTIS COSS IIII; REQVIES OPT(IMOR) MER(IT); REQVIES OPTIMORVM MERITOR(VM); TRB P CONS IIII P P PROCONSVL
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Aquileia; Arles; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; gold fraction; *solidus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 21-26; Arles 48, 69, 173-178; Rome 104-109; Siscia 41-46; Thessalonica 24-26; Ticinum 30, 38; Trier 19-21, 200-207, 242, 244, 517

Type E2 Emperor, seated on a throne, holding a (eagle-tipped) sceptre and a *mappa*

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM; VIRTVS EXERCITVS ROMANORVM; VOT XXX MVLT XXXX
Authority	Julian; Honorius
Mint	Antioch; Milan; Ravenna
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 204-206 *RIC X* Honorius 1208, 1330

Type A61 Emperor, seated on a throne, holding a sceptre and a *mappa*; there is a Caesar on either side of him, each holding a spear and a shield
• sometimes he is not holding a *mappa*

Legend	FELICITAS PERPETVA AVG ET CAESS NN; SALVS ET SPES REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople; Nicomedia
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 44-45, 88; Nicomedia 173-174

Type A62 Emperor, seated on a throne, holding a sceptre; surrounding him, are four Caesars, the furthest of which hold a spear and a parazonium

Legend	SECVRITAS PERPETVA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 89

Type A63 Emperor, seated on a throne, surrounded by his four sons; the three eldest are holding vertical spears

Legend	SALVS ET SPES REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Thessalonica
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Thessalonica 204

Type A64 Emperor standing beneath an arch with his two (or three) sons; each of them are holding a sceptre and a globe

• sometimes only the emperor holds the sceptre and the globe

Legend	FELICITAS ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Cyzicus; Heraclea; Rome; Nicomedia; Sirmium
Denomination	gold mutliple; silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Cyzicus 42-43; Heraclea 105; Rome 275; Nicomedia 88-89, 142-143; Sirmium 15

Type C3 Emperor, standing, dragging a captive and holding a spear and a shield; he is being crowned by Victory; before him, a woman kneels, raising her arms in supplication; in exergue, arms

Legend	VICTORIA AVGVSTI NOSTRI
Authority	Constans
Mint	Aquileia
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Aquileia 35

Type A65 Emperor, standing, erecting a trophy and holding a sceptre; at the foot of the trophy, there is a cuirass and a shield

Legend	SECVRITAS PERPETVAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Nicomedia; Sirmium; Ticinum
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 38; Aquileia 33; Nicomedia 53-55; Sirmium 42; Ticinum 49

Type G1 Emperor, standing, holding a *labarum* and a globe; a captive sits before him. Victory, holding a wreath and a palm, crowns the emperor

Legend	VICTORIAD N AVGUST
Authority	Valentinian I
Mint	Thessalonica
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC IX* Thessalonica 19

Type B11 Emperor, standing, holding a *labarum* and a spear (or a sceptre), being crowned by Victory
• sometimes he holds neither a spear nor a sceptre
• sometimes the emperor's foot is on a prow
• sometimes Victory also holds a palm

Legend	GAVDIVM POPVLI ROMANI; HOC SIGNO VICTOR ERIS; SALVATOR REI PVBLICAE; SPES REI PVBLICAE; TRIVMFATOR GENTIVM BARBARARVM
Authority	Constantius II; Constans
Mint	Aquileia; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; Æ2
Reference	*RIC VIII* Aquileia 1-2; Sirmium 23-24, 30-31; Siscia 9-11, 304-306, 309, 311-312; Thessalonica 61, 146; Trier 121

Type B12 Emperor, standing, holding a *labarum* (or Victory on a globe) and raising a kneeling turreted woman, who holds a cornucopia
• sometimes the female figure does not hold a cornucopia

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM; REPARATIO REIPVB; RESTITVTOR REIPVBLICAE; SALVS REI PVBLICAE
Authority	Constantius II; Valentinian II; Gratian; Theodosius I
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Lyons; Milan; Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; Æ2 (large); Æ2; Æ3; Æ4
Reference	*RIC VIII* Aquileia 186 *RIC IX* Alexandria 8; Antioch 42, 54, 64; Aquileia 20, 30, 42; Arles 20; Constantinople 54; Lyons 28; Milan 34; Nicomedia 27; Rome 43, 54, 69; Siscia 26; Thessalonica 37; Trier 48, 65

Type B13 Emperor, standing, holding a *labarum* in each hand; above him, a star
• sometimes A or III in left field

Legend	CONCORDIA MILITVM
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica
Denomination	Æ2 (large); Æ2 (small)
Reference	*RIC VIII* Sirmium 21-22, 28-29, 33-34; Siscia 301-303, 307-308, 310, 347a; Thessalonica 167

Type M2 Emperor, standing, holding a long staurogram and placing his other hand on the hilt of a sword; he is being crowned by the Hand of God and he places his foot on neck of serpent-tailed lion

Legend	VICTORIA AVGGG
Authority	Honorius
Mint	Ravenna
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC X* Honorius 1310-1311

Type H1 Emperor, standing, holding a sceptre and a *mappa*

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Valens
Mint	Antioch
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC IX* Antioch 17

Type A66 Emperor, standing, holding a sceptre and receiving a globe from Roma; Roma is seated on a throne (or a platform; or a cuirass and shield) and holds a sceptre

Legend	RESTITVTORI LIBERTATIS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 31-32; Trier 22-26

Type A67 Emperor, standing, holding a sceptre (or a spear) and receiving Victory on globe (or a wreath) from a female figure

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Sirmium
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Sirmium 44-45

Type A68 Emperor, standing, holding a spear (or a sceptre) and a globe; he is being crowned by Sol

- sometimes Sol holds a whip
- sometimes there is no globe

Legend	SOLI INVICTO COMITI
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Sirmium; Ticinum
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Sirmium 3, 21-22, 31; Ticinum 98-99

Type A69 Emperor, standing, holding a spear (or a sceptre) and a globe; he is being crowned by Victory

Legend	VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM; VICTOR OMNIVM GENTIVM; VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Sirmium; Thessalonica; Ticinum
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 45a; Aquileia 30; Sirmium 37, 47; Thessalonica 11-12; Ticinum 57a

Type B14 Emperor, standing, holding a spear and a globe; to the left, Victory holding a wreath and a palm

Legend	VICTORIA AVG NOSTRI
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Trier
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Trier 329-331

Type L1 Emperor, standing, holding a spear in one hand and resting his other hand on a shield; he is being crowned by Victory, who is holding a palm

Legend	VIRTVS EXERCITI
Authority	Arcadius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Nicomedia
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC X* Arcadius 56-76

Type D1 Emperor, standing, holding a standard

- sometimes the standard is a *labarum*
- sometimes the standard has a wreath on a banner

Legend	PAX AVGVSTORVM; TRIVMFATOR GENTIVM BARBARARVM; VIRTVS DD NN AVGG
Authority	Constans; Constantine II
Mint	Trier
Denomination	silver multiple; heavy *miliarensis*; *siliqua*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Trier 30-32, 144-150, 161-163, 170-174

Type A70 Emperor (or Caesar), standing, holding a standard (or a spear) and a globe

- sometimes the standard is a *labarum*
- sometimes he spurns (or is flanked by) one (or more) captive
- sometimes the globe is topped by Victory
- sometimes an eagle is by the Emperor's foot, holding a wreath
- sometimes there is a shield to right of the emperor (Constantine)

Legend	AETERNA PIETAS; FEL TEMP REPARATIO; GLORIA CONSTANTINI AVG; GLORIA REIPVBLICAE; GLORIA ROMANORVM; PRINCIPI(A) IVVENT(VTIS); PRINCIPIVM IVVENTVTIS; REPARATIO REI PVBL; RESTITVTOR REIP(VBLICAE); SALVS REIP; SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE; SPES REI PVBLICAE; SPES REI PVBLICE; TRIVMFATOR GENT BARB; VBIQVE VICTORES; VICTORIA AVGG(G); VICTORIA DN AVG; VICTORIA ROMANORVM; VIRT CONSTANTINI AVG; VIRTVS AVGG NN (?); VIRTVS AVGVSTORVM; VIRTVS EXERCITI; VIRTVS EXSERCITI; VIRTVS EXERCITVS
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II; Jovian; Julian; Valentinian I; Valens; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Arcadius; Honorius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; London; Lyons; Milan; Nicomedia; Ravenna; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; gold fraction; *solidus*; *aureus*; silver multiple; light *miliarensis*; *siliqua*; reduced *siliqua*; Æ1; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 42-44, 47, 51; Aquileia 29, 36; Arles 55; London 26, 132; Lyons 29; Nicomedia 114-116, 183-184; Rome 137-139, 254-255, 307; Siscia 245-247, 251; Thessalonica 164; Ticinum 105-107, 111-113; Trier 3-5, 138-145, 169-174, 186-188, 195-199, 447-448, 470-474, 495-496, 500-501 *RIC VIII* Alexandria 87-89; Antioch 193-194, 215, 228-229; Aquileia 233-241; Arles 17, 32, 40-41, 275-279, 298-302, 328, 335; Constantinople 149-155, 160, 175-177; Cyzicus 117-124; Heraclea 98-100, 107; Lyons 1-3, 201-203, 220-225; Nicomedia 112-114, 116-117; Rome 318-322, 375, 388-389, 399-401, 434-438, 445-448, 454, 462, 466; Sirmium 80-91, 109-112; Siscia 390-408; Thessalonica 172-173, 178-179, 207, 213-216, 229, 234-238; Trier 33-37, 361 *RIC IX* Alexandria 2, 18, 21; Antioch 1-2, 6-7, 9, 11, 19, 63, 68; Aquileia 2, 4, 6, 8; Arles 1, 4, 6, 8, 27; Constantinople 3, 24-25, 32-33, 66, 83, 88; Cyzicus 2, 5, 10, 25, 27; Heraclea 1-2, 4, 24, 27; London 1; Lyons 1, 5-6, 11, 33; Milan 2, 35; Nicomedia 2, 4-5, 7, 11, 14-15, 24, 44, 46; Rome 2, 7, 13-14, 16, 18, 20, 32, 52, 63, 69c-e; Sirmium 1, 3, 6, 12-15; Siscia 1, 6, 8; Thessalonica 1-3, 12-13, 15, 17, 22; Trier 1-2, 13-15, 22, 76 *RIC X* Arcadius 1-2, 55; Honorius 1205-1206, 1216, 1239-1240, 1251-1254, 1260-1261, 1286-1287, 1292, 1308-1309

Type A71 Emperor (or Caesar), standing, holding a standard and a parazonium; on either side, a captive

Legend	SECVRITAS PERPETVA; VIRTVS CAESARVM NN
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	gold multiple; gold fraction
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 102, 121

Type A72 Emperor, standing, holding a standard and a parazonium; one son, to left of emperor, is empty handed; the other two sons are holding sceptres and leaning on shields

Legend	SECVRITAS PERPETVA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 67

Type A73 Emperor (or Caesar), standing, holding a standard and a sceptre (or a spear)

- sometimes the standard is a *labarum*
- sometimes there are one or two standards (with or without an eagle) behind him
- sometimes there is a seated captive

Legend	CONSTANTINVS AVG; GLORIA CONSTANTI AVG; GLORIA ROMANORVM; GLORIA SECVLI; PRINCIPI(A) IVVENTVTIS; TRIVMFATOR GENTIVM BARBARVM; VIRTVS CONSTANTIS AVG
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; silver multiple; silver (uncertain); Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 45, 94-95; Aquileia 117; Constantinople 109-113; Cyzicus 21, 41; Nicomedia 71-76; Rome 252, 399; Sirmium 2, 5-7, 16, 40-41, 58-59; Siscia 207, 209, 226-228; Thessalonica 132-133, 138-139, 176, 190-191, 209-213; Ticinum 180-181; Trier 572-576, 579 *RIC VIII* Aquileia 48; Siscia 146-148, 355-356, 386-389

Type M3 Emperor, standing, holding a standard with v*ota* and supporting a shield also with v*ota*; the emperor is spurning a captive

Legend	VICTORIA AVGG
Authority	Honorius
Mint	Milan
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC X* Honorius 1209

Type A74 Emperor (Licinius), standing, holding a thunderbolt and a sceptre; an eagle looks back at the emperor

Legend	IOVI CONSERVATORI AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Arles
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* 196-197

Type G2 Emperor, standing, holding Victory on a globe and a *labarum* surmounted by Victory. The Victories hold a wreath above emperor's head.

Legend	GLORIA NOVI SAECULI
Authority	Valentinian I
Mint	Arles; Lyons
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC IX* Arles 10; Lyons 15

Type A75 Emperor, standing in an elephant quadriga, being crowned by Victory with a palm; on either side of them, two lictors

Legend	INNVMERI TRIVMFI AVG N
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 469

Type A76 Emperor, standing in a quadriga, scattering coins and holding an eagle-tipped sceptre
• sometimes the sceptre is not eagle-tipped
• sometimes he is holding Victory on globe (who is crowning him) rather than a sceptre

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM; no legend
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Valens; Valentinian II
Mint	Antioch; Constantinople; Nicomedia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *aureus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 103-106; Nicomedia 170 *RIC VIII* Antioch 77-78; Thessalonica 145 *RIC IX* Constantinople 1; Trier 89, 100

Type B15 Emperor, standing in a quadriga; the hand of God reaches down to him

Legend	DIVVS CONSTANTINVS AVG PATER AVGG; no legend
Authority	Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Trier
Denomination	*solidus*; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Alexandria 4, 12, 22; Antioch 37, 39; Arles 42; Constantinople 1, 37, 39, 52; Cyzicus 4, 19, 25, 30; Heraclea 13-14; Lyons 12; Nicomedia 4, 18, 25; Trier 44, 68

Type L2 Emperor, standing in a six-horse chariot, raising one hand and holding a globe in the other; a chi-rho appears in the left field and there are votive objects in the exergue

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Arcadius
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC IX* Arcadius 4-5

Type I1 Emperor, standing in a six-horse chariot, raising one hand and holding a globe in the other; Victories on either side of the emperor offer him wreaths

Legend	D N VALENS VICTOR SEMPER AVG
Authority	Gratian
Mint	Rome
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC IX* Rome 25

Type A77 Emperor, standing, leaning on a sceptre; before him, stands a soldier who is holding a trophy and presenting him with a kneeling personification of defeated city

Legend	PERPETVA FELICITAS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Sirmium
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Sirmium 46

Type I2 Emperor, standing on a galley, holding a globe and a spear; Victory, holding wreath, is at the prow and a seated figure is at the helm

Legend	FELICITAS REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Gratian
Mint	Aquileia
Denomination	Æ2
Reference	*RIC IX* Aquileia 29

Type B16 Emperor, standing on a galley, holding a phoenix (or Victory) on globe and a standard; Victory, sitting, steers the ship.

- sometimes the standard is a *labarum*
- sometimes the emperor's foot is on captive

Legend	FEL TEMP REPARATIO
Authority	Constantius II; Constans; Valentinian II
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	Æ2 (large); Æ2 (reduced); Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Alexandria 45, 50-53; Antioch 121, 124; Aquileia 97-99, 108-109, 117-118; Arles 99-101, 116-117, 124-128; Constantinople 80, 83; Cyzicus 66, 68; Heraclea 62, 66, 68; Lyons 69-78, 95-99, 104-106; Nicomedia 61, 64; Rome 107-135, 146-152, 250; Siscia 197-209, 229-230, 233-234, 237-239, 243-246, 248, 250-252, 255-256, 327-331; Thessalonica 107-113, 119-122, 133, 136, 165, 168-170, 174-175; Trier 212-219, 238-244 *RIC IX* Thessalonica 61

Type K2 Emperor, standing on a galley, raising his right hand; Victory is seated at the helm

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Theodosius I
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Nicomedia; Siscia; Thessalonica
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC IX* Alexandria 6; Antioch 40, 59; Constantinople 52, 79; Cyzicus 14, 23; Heraclea 11, 21; Nicomedia 25, 40; Siscia 32; Thessalonica 44

Type A78 Emperor, standing on a platform, holding a trophy and being crowned with a palm by Victory; he is flanked by four soldiers with horses, three soldiers with shields, and two soldiers holding standards

Legend	SALVS REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 36

Type A79 Emperor, standing on a platform, raising his right hand; he is flanked by two soldiers and two captives; behind them, there are six standards

Legend	ADLOCVTIO AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 48

Type A80 Emperor, standing, presenting a globe to one of his sons; a second Caesar is on his other side

Legend	GAVDIVM REIPVBLICAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 185

Type A81 Emperor, standing, raising a kneeling turreted female figure and holding a sceptre; he is being crowned by Victory

• sometimes the female figure is being presented to the emperor by a soldier

Legend	PIETAS AVGVSTI N(OSTRI)
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Nicomedia; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 69, 162-163, 165-168; Trier 569-570

Type A82 Emperor, standing, raising his hand towards a soldier; the soldier holds a shield and drags a captive
• sometimes GOTHIA is in exergue

Legend	DEBELLATORI GENTIVM BARBARARVM
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 356-357, 531, 534

Type K3 Emperor, standing, raising his right hand and holding a globe

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Theodosius I; Arcadius
Mint	Aquileia; Constantinople; Milan
Denomination	light *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC IX* Aquileia 56; Constantinople 85; Milan 25 *RIC X* Arcadius 47

Type G3 Emperor, standing, receiving a shield inscribed with a swastika from a hand above

Legend	PERPETVITAS IMPERI
Authority	Valentinian I
Mint	Sirmium
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC IX* Sirmium 5

Type A83 Emperor, standing, receiving Victory on a globe from Respublica; to the right, Pax offers a wreath
• sometimes Victory (not on a globe) crowns the emperor

Legend	PAX AETERNA AVG N; VICTORIOSO SEMPER; VOTA PVBLICA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Nicomedia; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 66-67; Ticinum 29, 59; Trier 16-17, 89-91

Type A84 Emperor, standing, receiving Victory on a globe from Sol
• sometimes there is a captive (or suppliant) between them

Legend	FELICITAS PERPETVA SAECVLI; SOLI COMITI AVG N; SOLI COMITI CONATANTINI AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Sirmium; Thessalonica; Ticinum
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 49; Aquileia 35; Arles 114; Sirmium 8; Thessalonica 10; Ticinum 56, 108

Type A85 Emperor (or Caesar), togate and standing, holding a sceptre and a globe

Legend	FELIX PROCESSVS COS II; FELIX PROCESSVS COS IIII AVG N; FELIX PROCESSVS COS VI; FELIX PROCESSVS COS VI AVG N; SENATVS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 39-41, 46; Aquileia 28, 34; Nicomedia 102; Rome 272; Sirmium 1, 4, 43, 57; Thessalonica 146; Ticinum 26, 104; Trier 12, 18

Type B17 Emperor, standing under an arch, holding a sceptre (or a spear) and a globe, being crowned by Victory

Legend	VICTORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantius II; Julian
Mint	Antioch; Sirmium
Denomination	light *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 103-104, 181-182, 210; Sirmium 104

Type F2 Emperor, standing under an arch, holding a spear and a globe

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Jovian; Valens
Mint	Antioch
Denomination	light *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 226 *RIC IX* Antioch 4, 29

Type B18 Emperor, veiled and standing, raising his left hand

Legend	VN MR
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Nicomedia
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Alexandria 32, 35, 38, 41; Antioch 112, 117; Constantinople 68, 71, 75; Cyzicus 46, 54, 59, 62; Heraclea 44, 51, 53, 58; Nicomedia 48, 54, 57

Type L3 Empress, seated on a throne, folding her hands over her breast; she is being crowned from above by the hand of God; there is a cross in the left and right fields

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Arcadius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Nicomedia
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC X* Arcadius 77-84

Type A86 Empress, seated on a throne, holding a child in her lap; to the left, Felicitas holds a caduceus; to right, Pietas; on either side of the throne, a genius holds a wreath

Legend	PIETAS AVGVSTAE
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 443-445

Type K4 Empress, standing, her arms folded across her breast

Legend	SALVS REI PVBLICAE
Authority	Theodosius I
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Nicomedia
Denomination	Æ2
Reference	*RIC IX* Alexandria 17; Antioch 62; Constantinople 82; Cyzicus 24; Heraclea 25; Nicomedia 43

Type C4 Three emperors seated on thrones; in exergue, vota

Legend	FELICITAS PERPETVA
Authority	Constans
Mint	Thessalonica
Denomination	gold multiple; light *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Thessalonica 18, 52

Type C5 Three emperors seated on thrones; the one in the middle is raising his hand and placing his feet on a footstool inscribed with v*ota;* on either side, his co-emperors are each holding a *mappa*

Legend	FELICITAS PERPETVA
Authority	Constans
Mint	Siscia
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; silver multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Siscia 18, 18a, 41

Type C6 Three emperors, standing, holding sceptres (or spears) and resting their hands on shields
• sometimes only the outer two emperors are resting their hands on shields

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM; PIETAS DDD NNN AVGVSTORVM; SALVS ET SPES REI PVBLICAE
Authority	Constans; Gratian; Arcadius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Nicomedia; Thessalonica
Denomination	gold multiple; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Thessalonica 20-21 *RIC IX* Thessalonica 28 *RIC X* Arcadius 141-159

Type A87 Two Caesars, standing, clasping hands; their mother stands between them, placing her hands on their shoulders

Legend	FELIX PROGENIES CONSTANTINI AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 442

Type A88 Two Caesars standing in an elephant quadriga; the Emperor stand to the right, raising his hand; on either side, a lictor

Legend	AETERNA GLORIA SENAT P Q R
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 467-468

Type G4 Two emperors, seated on thrones, each holding a *mappa* and a sceptre (or a globe)

- sometimes the emperors rest their feet on foot-stools
- sometimes the sceptres are eagle-tipped
- sometimes only one emperor holds a *mappa*
- sometimes the emperors are flanked by captives

Legend	VOTA PVBLICA; VOTA PVBLCIA (sic)
Authority	Valentinian I; Valens; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Honorius
Mint	Antioch; Constantinople; Milan; Nicomedia; Trier
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC IX* Antioch 23; Constantinople 29; Milan 3, 9, 21; Nicomedia 16-17; Trier 18, 51, 91 *RIC X* Honorius 1207

Type H2 Two emperors, seated on thrones, each holding a sceptre and a globe; between them is a small, standing, togate figure, above whose head is a shield inscribed with v*ota*

Legend	SPE SRP
Authority	Valens
Mint	Antioch
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC IX* Antioch 20

Type C7 Two emperors, seated on thrones, resting their feet on a dais; their arms are folded across their chests and they are holding sceptres; on either side, there is an attendant holding a palm; above, a chi-rho

Legend	GLORIA REI PVBLICAE
Authority	Constans
Mint	Siscia
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Siscia 106

Type G5 Two emperors, seated on thrones, together holding a globe; behind them, a Victory; below them, a palm branch

• sometimes Victory crowns the emperors with wreaths
• sometimes only one emperor holds a *mappa*
• sometimes there is no palm branch

Legend	GLORIA REIPVB; VICTORES AVGVSTI; VICTORIA AVGG(G); VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM
Authority	Valentinian I; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I
Mint	Aquileia; Lyons; Milan; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	solidus; *argenteus*; Æ3
Reference	*RIC IX* Aquileia 21, 24, 40; Lyons 38; Milan 5, 8, 20; Sirmium 9-10; Siscia 2; Thessalonica 4, 33-34, 41, 55; Trier 17, 90

Type L4 Two emperors, seated on thrones, together holding a shield inscribed with v*ota;* there is a cross above the shield and a palm branch between the emperors' legs

Legend	VOTA PLVRIA
Authority	Arcadius
Mint	Sirmium
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC X* Arcadius 3

Type G6 Two emperors, seated on thrones with their feet on footstools, each raising a hand in benediction and holding a globe

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Valentinian I
Mint	Rome
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC IX* Rome 1

Type G7 Two emperors, standing, each holding a *labarum* and a globe

• sometimes there is a Victory on a globe, who is crowning the emperors

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM; SECVRITAS REIP
Authority	Valentinian I; Valens
Mint	Constantinople; Siscia
Denomination	heavy *miliarense*; light *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC IX* Constantinople 8; Siscia 3-4

Type H3 Two emperors, standing, each holding a spear and together holding Victory on a globe, who crowns them

Legend	VIRTVS ROMANORVM
Authority	Valens
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC IX* Constantinople 5

Type A89 Two emperors (or caesars), standing and facing each other, each holding a sceptre and a globe
• sometimes the sceptre is eagle-tipped
• sometimes only one person holds a sceptre and a globe

Legend	CONSTANTINVS ET CONSTANTIVS NOBB CAESS; CRISPVS ET CONSTANTINVS IVN NOBB CAESS; CRISPVS ET CONSTANTINVS NOBB CAESS COSS II; CRISPVS ET CONSTANTIVS NOBB CAESS; DD NN CONSTANTIVS ET CONSTANS AVGG
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II
Mint	Antioch; Nicomedia; Sirmium
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 37, 70; Nicomedia 51, 68; Sirmium 18 *RIC VIII* Antioch 75

Type C8 Two emperors, standing in a quadriga, each raising one hand and holding a sceptre in their other hand; behind each horse, there is a soldier holding a spear

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Constans
Mint	Aquileia
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Aquileia 42

Type B19 Two emperors, standing in a six-horse chariot, each raising a hand; there are two Victories flanking them, each holding a wreath and a palm; in the exergue, votive objects
• sometimes there is only one emperor in the chariot

Legend	DD NN CONSTANTIVS ET CONSTANS AVGG
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Antioch
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 67-68

Type H4 Two emperors, standing under an arch, each holding a sceptre and a globe

Legend	GLORIA ROMANORVM
Authority	Valens
Mint	Antioch; Constantinople
Denomination	light *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC IX* Antioch 5, 30-31; Constantinople 9

Type B20 Two emperors (or emperor and caesar), standing under an arch, each holding a spear

Legend	FELICITAS ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Antioch; Aquileia; Nicomedia; Sirmium
Denomination	light *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 102; Aquileia 182; Nicomedia 77-79; Sirmium 11-14

A4. MILITARY

Type A90 Camp gate (with two or three turrets)
• sometimes there is a star, an S, or a tau-rho above the gate

Legend	D N CONSTANTINI MAX AVG; GLORIA REIPVBLICAE; GLORIA ROMANORVM; PROVIDENTIAE AVGG; PROVIDENTIAE CAESS; VIRTVS AVGG
Authority	Constantine I; Valentinian I; Valens; Valentinian II
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; London; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3; Æ4
Reference	*RIC VII* Alexandria 34-37, 41-43, 45-47, 49-52, 54-56; Antioch 63-66, 71-74, 78-79, 81, 84; Arles 264-276, 280-284, 286-297, 301-306, 309-316, 318-323, 325-339; Constantinople 7-10, 20-21, 27-28, 39-40; Cyzicus 24-27, 34-38, 44-48, 51-53, 55-64; Heraclea 14-49, 65, 67-68, 74-78, 83-84, 88, 96-98, 107-108; London 293-298; Lyons 225-233; Nicomedia 90-94, 121-128, 144-147, 151-158; Rome 165-193; 264-269, 287-290, 323-326; Sirmium 53; Siscia 183-186, 193-195, 200-203, 214-217; Thessalonica 153-158, 169-172; Ticinum 189, 198-201, 205-208; Trier 449-457, 461-464, 475-480, 504-507, 509-514 *RIC IX* Constantinople 40; Thessalonica 59, 62; Trier 29

Type A91 Circular cippus inscribed with v*ota*
• sometimes there is a fire above the cippus

Legend	VOTA ORBIS ET VRBIS SEN ET P R
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Aquileia
Denomination	silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 80-84

Type A92 Figure (Mars; or Emperor; Victory; or, rarely, Caesar), standing, holding a standard (or a trophy) and dragging a captive
• sometimes he pushes another captive with his foot
• sometimes the standard is a *labarum*
• sometimes a tau-rho appears in the field

Legend	FVNDAT PACIS; GLORIA CONSTANTINI AVG; GLORIA ROMANORVM; SALVS REI PVBLICAE; VICTORIA AVGVSTORVM; VIRTVS CONSTANTINI CAES
Authority	Constantine I; Valentinian I; Valens; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Honorius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; heavy *miliarense*; light *miliarensis*; Æ2; Æ3; Æ4
Reference	**Imperial figure**: ***RIC VII*** Nicomedia 181-182; Siscia 206 ***RIC IX*** Alexandria 1, 4, 15; Antioch 10, 35; Aquileia 7, 11, 17, 45; Arles 7, 16, 18; Constantinople 16, 41; Cyzicus 8, 12; Heraclea 3, 9; Lyons 10, 20, 22; Nicomedia 9; Rome 15, 23, 27, 55; Sirmium 4; Siscia 5, 14, 21, 38; Thessalonica 16, 26, 31, 57, 60; Trier 5, 30, 96 **Mars**: ***RIC VII*** Rome 12-13; Trier 61 **Victory**: ***RIC IX*** Alexandria 20, 23; Antioch 67, 70; Aquileia 58; Constantinople 86, 90; Cyzicus 26, 30; Heraclea 26; Nicomedia 45; Rome 6, 33, 64; Thessalonica 65 ***RIC X*** Honorius 1237-1238, 1245-1249

Type A93 Gate of Trier with a statue of emperor, who is holding a sceptre; captives flank the gate; in front of the gate is a river and bridge; behind the gate is the walls of Trier

Legend	AVGG GLORIA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Trier
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Trier 1

Type A94 *Labarum* with three medallions piercing a serpent; above, a chi-rho

Legend	SPES PVBLIC
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 19, 26

Type A95 Male figure (Caesar; or Emperor; or Mars; or soldier), standing, holding a standard (or a sceptre; or a spear; or a trophy) in one hand and resting his other hand on a shield

- sometimes the standard is a *labarum*
- sometimes, beside him, one (or more) captive
- sometimes he subjugates the captive
- sometimes there is an eagle holding a wreath in the right field

Legend	FEL TEMP REPARATIO; GLORIA EXERCITVS; GLORIA NOVI SAECULI; GLORIA ROMANORVM; MARTI CONSERVATORI; PRINCIPI(A) IVVENTVTIS; RESTITVTOR REIP(VBLICAE); TRIVMFATOR GENTIVM BARBARARVM; VICTOR OMNIVM GENTIVM; VIRTVS AVGG NN; VIRTVS AVGVSTI; VIRTVS DD NN AVGG; VIRTVS EXERCITVM; VIRTVS EXERCITVS; VIRTVS ROMANI EXERCITVS; VIRTVS ROMANORVM; or no legend
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II; Julian; Valentinian I; Valens; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Arcadius; Honorius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; London; Lyons; Milan; Nicomedia; Ravenna; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; silver multiple; heavy *miliarense*; light *miliarense*; *siliqua*; silver (uncertain); Æ1; Æ2; Æ3; Æ4
Reference	**Mars**: ***RIC VII*** Arles 23-24, 29, 132-135, 143, 161-163, 168, 172, 179, 183; London 4, 24-25; Lyons 10-14; Rome 6-11, 25-26; Ticinum 5-6, 11-13, 18-19, 23-24, 47; Trier 49-55, 68-69, 77-83, 108-118 **Imperial figure**: ***RIC VII*** Aquileia 9-10; Arles 106-107, 113; Heraclea 100; London 105, 133-136; Nicomedia 81-83; Rome 405; Siscia 39-40; Thessalonica 20-21, 135; Ticinum 33, 65, 73-78; Trier 27-31, 578 ***RIC VIII*** Alexandria 54-57, 62-65; Antioch 125, 127; Aquileia 107, 119-120; Constantinople 84, 87, 89-90; Cyzicus 41-42, 70-71, 75-76, 80, 83-84; Heraclea 63, 69, 72, 75; Lyons 33; Nicomedia 67-68, 71; Rome 4-5, 14, 21, 32, 43, 47, 104; Siscia 223-226; Thessalonica 1, 22-24, 32-35, 78-92; Trier 1-11, 119-120 ***RIC IX*** Alexandria 7; Antioch 41, 60; Aquileia 10, 23; Arles 5, 15; Constantinople 12, 15, 20, 53, 80; Cyzicus 15; Heraclea 12, 22; Lyons 40-41; Nicomedia 23, 26, 41; Rome 34, 41; Siscia 10, 23, 33; Thessalonica 7-8, 10-11, 45, 56; Trier 26, 42, 53, 93 ***RIC X*** Arcadius 45; Honorius 1220-1223, 1264-1265, 1295, 1315, 1344, 1361 **Soldier**: ***RIC VII*** Constantinople 16, 22, 58, 131, 135; Thessalonica 197 ***RIC VIII*** Arles 250-252, 289-290, 306-308; Constantinople 100; Lyons 208-209; Rome 238-239, 244-246; Sirmium 101; Siscia 323; Thessalonica 46-48, 140, 160-161, 203-204; Trier 53-54, 61-62, 73-77, 87-89, 100-101 ***RIC IX*** Arles 2

Type A96 Male figure (Mars; or Emperor; or Caesar), standing, holding a trophy and a spear (or a standard); on either side, a captive

- sometimes he holds a shield instead of a trophy
- sometimes there is only one captive
- sometimes there are no captives

Legend	GAVDIVM ROMANORVM; GLORIA CONSTANTINI AVG; MARTI CONSERVATORI; VIRTVS AVG ET CAESS NN; VIRTVS AVGVSTI N; VIRTVS CONSTANTINI CAES; VIRTVS CONSTANTINI CAVS (sic); VIRTVS D N CONSTANTINI AVG; VIRTVS EXERCITVS; VIRTVS EXERCITVS GAL(L); VIRTVS EXERCITVM; VIRTVS MILITVM DD NN
Authority	Constantine I; Constantine II
Mint	Arles; Nicomedia; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; *solidus*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	**Imperial Figure**: ***RIC VII*** Nicomedia 105-106, 132, 134-138; Siscia 208; Thessalonica 163 **Mars**: ***RIC VII*** Arles 25-28, 115-117, 129-131; Sirmium 28-30; Siscia 29-30; Thessalonica 15-18, 22; Ticinum 60; Trier 192-194 ***RIC VIII*** Trier 12-14

Type E3 Pole with a wreath surmounted by an eagle; it is flanked by two standards

Legend	FIDES EXERCITVVM
Authority	Julian
Mint	Arles
Denomination	heavy *miliarense*
Reference	*RIC VIII* Arles 305

Type A97 Shield on a cippus inscribed with AVG and decorated with a garland

Legend	SAECVLI FELICITAS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Rome
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Rome 158-164

Type B21 Soldier leading a small figure from a hut beneath a tree and holding a spear

Legend	FEL TEMP REPARATIO
Authority	Constantius II; Constans
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	Æ2 (small); Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Alexandria 58-61, 66-71; Antioch 126, 128; Aquileia 100-106, 121; Arles 104-108; Constantinople 85-86, 88, 91-92; Cyzicus 72-74, 77-79, 81-82, 85-87; Heraclea 64, 70-71, 73-74, 76-78; Lyons 84-89; Nicomedia 69-70, 72; Rome 137-140, 156-161; Siscia 212-222; Thessalonica 117-118; Trier 220-225

Type A98 Soldier, standing, holding a shield and dragging a captive to the emperor

Legend	GAVDIVM ROMANORVM
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Ticinum
Denomination	*solidus*
Reference	*RIC VII* Ticinum 52

Type E4 Soldier, standing, holding a trophy and placing his hand on the head of a kneeling captive
• sometimes there is an eagle holding a wreath in right field

Legend	VIRT EXERC ROMANOR; VIRTVS EXERC GALL; VIRTVS EXERCITVS ROMANI; VIRTVS EXERCITVS ROMANORVM
Authority	Julian
Mint	Antioch; Arles; Constantinople; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica
Denomination	*solidus*; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 195-203; Arles 303-304; Constantinople 156-158; Lyons 226; Nicomedia 115; Rome 323-324, 327; Sirmium 92-100; Siscia 409; Thessalonica 217-219

Type A99 Soldier, standing, holding Victory on a globe and receiving Utilitas; Utilitas, stands on a prow, holding a cornucopia and scales

Legend	VTILITAS PVBLICA
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Arles
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 49-51

Type B22 Soldier, standing, spearing a fallen horseman and holding a shield on left arm; to right, a shield lies on the ground
• sometimes there is a gamma or III in the field

Legend	FEL TEMP REPARATIO; VIRTVS EXERCITVS (VS with dots below)
Authority	Constantius II; Constans; Valentinian II
Mint	Alexandria; Amiens; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	Æ2 (large); Æ2 (small); Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Alexandria 44, 46-49, 72-86; Amiens 46-49; Antioch 122-123, 132-156, 187-192; Aquileia 94-96, 113-116, 187-209, 212-232; Arles 102-103, 118-123, 211-224, 266-274; Constantinople 78-79, 81-82, 106-128, 135-148; Cyzicus 65, 67, 69, 92-116; Heraclea 61, 65, 67, 82-97; Lyons 79-83, 100-103, 183-200; Nicomedia 60, 62-63, 65-66, 84-98, 104-111; Rome 135-136, 249, 254-284, 304-312, 314-317; Sirmium 32, 35-53, 69-79; Siscia 210-211, 253-254, 257-258, 332-354, 361-385; Thessalonica 114-116, 123, 128-129, 134, 137, 166, 171, 176-177, 180-192, 208-212; Trier 348-360 *RIC IX* Aquileia 43

Type A100 Standard inscribed with *vota;* it is flanked by two seated captives
• sometimes it is a trophy instead of a standard
• sometimes FRAN AND ALAM appear in exergue above the mint mark

Legend	GAVDIVM ROMANORVM; REPARATIO GALLIARVM; VIRTVS EXERCIT
Authority	Constantine I; Constans; Julian
Mint	Aquileia; Arles; London; Lyons; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	*solidus*; light *miliarense*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 39-63; London 183-198; Lyons 101-124; Siscia 109-139; Thessalonica 72-83; Ticinum 114-129; Trier 249-302 *RIC VIII* Lyons 204; Trier 151-160

Type A101 Three (or four) standards
• sometimes, if four standards, the centre two standards are inscribed with an Alpha and an Omega; a chi-rho appears above them
• sometimes, if three standards, the middle one is surmounted by an eagle; the right one is surmounted by a wreath; the left one is surmounted by a hand

Legend	CONSTANS AVG; CONSTANTINVS AVG; CONSTANTINVS CAES(AR); CONSTANTINVS MAX AVG; CONSTANTIVS AVG(VSTVS); CONSTANS P F AVG; D N IVLIANVS CAES; D N IVLIANVS NOC CAES; FIDIS MILITVM; GLORIA EXERCITVS; SALVS REIPVBLICAE; SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI; VIRTVS EXERCITVM; VIRTVS EXERCITVS
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II; Valentinian I; Valens
Mint	Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	silver (uncertain); *argenteus*; light *miliarensis*; heavy *miliarensis*; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 7-12; Constantinople 55-56, 99, 122-125; Heraclea 103-104, 148-149; Nicomedia 86-87; Rome 376; Siscia 198-199, 211, 231-232; Thessalonica 150-151, 218; Ticinum 185; Trier 580-585 *RIC VIII* Arles 206, 243-249; Constantinople 13-14, 131; Cyzicus 39-40; Nicomedia 76; Rome 71, 243; Siscia 50; Thessalonica 38, 49-51, 158-159, 201-202; Trier 20-24 *RIC IX* Arles 3; Lyons 3; Nicomedia 18

Type A102 Trophy; flanked by two spears and four shields

Legend	VIRTVS AVG ET CAESS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Sirmium
Denomination	silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Sirmium 17

Type A103 Two soldiers, standing, each holding a spear in their outer hand and resting their inner hand on a shield; between them, there are two standards

• sometimes there is only one standard between them

Legend	GLORIA EXERCITVS
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Constantine II;
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Alexandria 58-62, 65-69; Antioch 85-90, 108-112; Aquileia 118-121, 124-127, 131-135, 139-147; Arles 341-342, 345-350, 353-355, 358-361, 364-367, 370-372, 375-378, 381-384, 387-391, 394-399, 402-406, 412-414; Constantinople 59-61, 73-77, 80-84, 137-144, 149-155; Cyzicus 65-70, 76-89, 94-104, 109-117, 122-146; Heraclea 111-113, 116-118, 121-123, 126-128, 131-133, 136-142, 150-157; Lyons 236-240, 243-245, 248-250, 253-255, 258, 261-265, 268-269, 271-272, 276-278, 280-282, 285-288; Nicomedia 188-194, 199-206; Rome 327-330, 335-337, 350-353, 363-369, 372, 381-385, 388-389, 391-395, 400-401; Siscia 219-221, 235-239, 252-256, 261-266; Thessalonica 183-186, 198-202, 222-228; Trier 518-521, 525-528, 537-541, 544-546, 549-552, 555-560 *RIC VIII* Alexandria 5-7, 13-15, 18-21, 23-25; Antioch 40-63; Aquileia 10-34; Arles 1-7, 10-14, 18-24, 28-29, 33-37, 43-58; Constantinople 23-32, 40-47, 51a, 53-54; Cyzicus 5-18, 20-24, 26-29, 31-34; Heraclea 15-39; Lyons 4-11, 13-31; Nicomedia 5-17, 19-24; Rome 2-3, 24-26, 36-38, 46a, 48-52, 57-58; Siscia 74-104; Thessalonica 55-59; Trier 38-41, 45-46, 49-52, 57-60, 69-72, 80-86, 93-99, 101-118

A5. MISCELLANEOUS (LEGENDS; SYMBOLS; VOTA, ETC.)

Type B23 Bridge over a river

Legend	no legend
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	Æ4
Reference	*RIC VIII* Constantinople 21

Type B24 Chi-rho flanked by an Alpha and an Omega

Legend	SALVS AVG NOSTRI
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Trier
Denomination	Æ2
Reference	*RIC VIII* Trier 332-336

Type K5 Chi-rho within a laurel wreath

Legend	no legend
Authority	Theodosius I; Arcadius; Honorius
Mint	Constantinople; Ravenna
Denomination	*semissis*; *tremissis*; heavy *miliarensis*; *siliqua*
Reference	*RIC IX* Constantinople 76, 78
	RIC X Arcadius 18, 46; Honorius 1343

Type L5 Cross

Legend	CONCORDIA AVG(GG)
Authority	Arcadius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Nicomedia
Denomination	Æ4
Reference	*RIC X* Arcadius 106-141

Type L6 Cross within a laurel wreath

Legend	no legend
Authority	Arcadius
Mint	Constantinople
Denomination	*tremissis*; *siliqua*
Reference	*RIC X* Arcadius 21, 50

Type A104 Eight-pointed star within a laurel wreath

Legend	no legend
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Thessalonica
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Thessalonica 48-51

Type A105 Globe on an altar inscribed with vota; above, there are three stars

Legend	BEATA TRANQVILLITAS
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	London; Lyons; Trier
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* London 199-288; Lyons 125-208; Trier 303-334, 341-355, 368-428

Type A106 Legend and mint mark within a four-fold wreath; at top of the wreath, there is an eagle or a star in a medallion

Legend	VOTIS/X/CAESS/NN
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Nicomedia
Denomination	gold multiple
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 118-120

Type A107 Legend within a laurel wreath

Legend	SOROR CONSTANTINI AVG; no legend
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Constantinople; Rome
Denomination	Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Constantinople 15; Rome 321

Type B25 Letter M surrounded by dots

Legend	FEL TEMP REPARATIO
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Rome
Denomination	Æ3
Reference	*RIC VIII* Rome 313

Type A108 Name and title of imperial figure (Emperor; or Caesar; or Empress) within a laurel wreath
• sometimes the wreath is above the emperor's name
• sometimes there is no wreath
• sometimes there is a star above the emperor's name

Legend	no legend
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; Lyons; Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Trier
Denomination	siliqua; silver (uncertain); Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Antioch 52-62; Arles 410; Constantinople 13-14, 132; Cyzicus 30-33; Heraclea 81; Lyons 283; Nicomedia 98, 197; Rome 281-284; Siscia 189-192, 259; Thessalonica 141-144, 221; Trier 485-491 *RIC VIII* Alexandria 1-3; Antioch 32-34

Type B26 Star within a laurel wreath

Legend	no legend
Authority	Constantius II
Mint	Antioch; Arles; Constantinople; Lyons; Rome
Denomination	siliqua; reduced siliqua; Æ4
Reference	*RIC VIII* Antioch 110, 185, 187; Arles 204-205, 209-210, 255-257; Constantinople 22; Lyons 181-182; Rome 236-237

Type A109 Three palm branches
• sometimes there is a star above them

Legend	CONSTANTINVS CAESAR; CONSTANTIVS AVG; CONSTANTIVS NOB CAES
Authority	Constantine I; Constans
Mint	Nicomedia; Rome; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum
Denomination	siliqua; silver (uncertain)
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 187; Rome 379-380; Thessalonica 195; Ticinum 184 *RIC VIII* Rome 1; Siscia 60-69

Type A110 Two interlaced laurel wreaths
• sometimes there is a star above them

Legend	CONSTANTINVS AVG
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Nicomedia; Sirmium; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	solidus
Reference	*RIC VII* Nicomedia 108-109; Sirmium 62; Ticinum 192; Trier 497

Type A111 *Vota*

Legend	CAESARVM NOSTRORVM; CONSTANTINI AVG(VSTI); LICINI AVGVSTI; no legend
Authority	Constantine I
Mint	Arles; Lyons; Siscia; Thessalonica
Denomination	gold multiple; Æ2; Æ3
Reference	*RIC VII* Arles 208-222; Lyons 91-100; Siscia 140-144; Thessalonica 84-95, 166-167

Type A112 *Vota* within a laurel wreath

• sometimes there is an eagle or a dot in the central medallion of the wreath

Legend	CAESARVM NOSTRORVM; CONSTANTINI CAES; D N CONSTANTINI (MAX) AVG; DOMINOR(VM) NOSTROR(VM) CAESS; FELICITAS PERPETVA; FELICITAS REI PVBLICE; FELICITAS ROMANORVM; GAVDICM POPVLI ROMANI (sic); GAVDIVM POPVLI ROMANI; no legend
Authority	Constantine I; Constantius II; Constans; Julian; Jovian; Valentinian I; Valens; Gratian; Valentinian II; Theodosius I; Arcadius; Honorius
Mint	Alexandria; Antioch; Aquileia; Arles; Constantinople; Cyzicus; Heraclea; London; Lyons; Milan; Nicomedia; Ravenna; Rome; Sirmium; Siscia; Thessalonica; Ticinum; Trier
Denomination	gold multiple; solidus; aureus; nine-siliqua piece; semissis; silver multiple; heavy miliarense; light miliarense; argenteus; siliqua; reduced siliqua; silver (uncertain); Æ2; Æ3; Æ4
Reference	*RIC VII* Aquileia 64-79, 85-115, 138; Arles 223-256, 259-263, 411; Heraclea 7-10, 56-64, 66, 69-73, 82, 87, 90-94, 106; London 291-292; Lyons 210-211, 213, 215-218, 220-221, 223-224, 284; Nicomedia 198; Rome 201-247, 318-320, 322; Siscia 145-182, 260; Thessalonica 27-47, 52-58, 96-130, 206-207; Ticinum 130-176, 186-188; Trier 339-340, 430-434, 439-441, 493-494 *RIC VIII* Alexandria 33-34, 36-37, 39-40, 42-43, 90-92; Antioch 30-31, 35-36, 105-109, 113-116, 118-120, 183-184, 186, 211-214, 219-221, 225, 227, 230-233; Aquileia 47, 58-60, 131, 142, 183-185, 211, 244-245, 247; Arles 59, 61, 203, 207-208, 253-254, 258-265, 291-297, 309-312, 324-326, 329-334; Constantinople 11-12, 56, 58-61, 67, 69-70, 72-74, 76-77, 101-105, 133-134, 159, 165-167, 172-174, 178-179; Cyzicus 3-3a, 47-53, 55-58, 60-61, 63-64, 129-133; Heraclea 1, 40, 45-50, 52, 54-57, 59-60, 105-106, 108-111; Lyons 180, 216-219, 227-235, 239, 241; Nicomedia 37-39, 49-53, 55-56, 58-59, 80-83, 102a-103, 122a-125, 127-129; Rome 234-235, 302-303, 328-330, 332-334; Sirmium 10, 15-20, 66-68, 102-103, 108, 117-120; Siscia 14-16, 19-22, 40, 42-49, 51-52, 70-73, 145, 149-154, 261, 300, 324-326, 414-416, 420-426; Thessalonica 7-10, 16-17, 42-45, 76-77, 163-164, 205-206, 221, 227-228, 239; Trier 169, 363-365 *RIC IX* Alexandria 12-14, 19; Antioch 8, 27-28, 32-34, 52-53, 55-58, 65-66; Aquileia 3, 5, 13-14, 36-38, 48-51; Arles 11-12, 14, 24, 28; Constantinople 11, 13, 34-39, 42bis, 51, 59-60, 62-64, 77, 87; Cyzicus 3, 19-22; Heraclea 18-20; London 4; Lyons 4, 8, 14, 16-17, 19, 30, 35, 42; Milan 13-14, 24, 26-27, 30; Nicomedia 6, 19-22, 35, 37-39; Rome 10, 50-51, 58, 62; Sirmium 2, 8; Siscia 9, 11-13, 16, 18-19, 24-25, 29-31, 36-37; Thessalonica 9, 14, 25, 29-30, 36, 43, 48-49, 58; Trier 3-4, 23, 41, 44, 52, 59-63, 73-74, 80-81, 86, 109-110 *RIC X* Arcadius 48-49, 51-54; Honorius 1217-1219, 1224-1226, 1229, 1262-1263, 1293-1294

APPENDIX B

Datable inscriptions that form the core data sample presented in Chapter 6.

Legends

Type of inscription:

- Building Inscription/Commemoration (B)
- Dog Tag (DT)
- Funerary (F)
- Funerary: Rooftile (FRT)
- Funerary: Sarcophagus (FS)
- Gemstone (G)
- Gold bar (GB)
- Honorific Inscription (H)
- Milestone (M)
- Religious/Cult Inscription (R)
- Religious Column (RC)
- Wall Painting (WP)

Other symbols present:

- Anchor (A)
- Alpha and Omega (AW)
- Bird(s) (B)
- (in) Circle (C)
- Dove(s) (D)
- Fish (F)
- Other(s) (O)
- Palm (P)
- Peter Symbol (PS)
- S (Swastika)
- Vessel (V)
- (in) Wreath (W)
- Wreath separate (WS)

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
beginning of 313	M	Cuicul (Djemila, Algeria)	chi-rho		*AE* 2000, no. 1799
beginning of 313	M	Novariciacan? (Beni Fouda, Algeria)	chi-rho		*AE* 2000, no. 1801
315	WP	*Domus Faustae*, Rome (Lateran Palace)	tau-rho	AW	Scrinari (1991), 166.
319	M	on the road between Cuicul and Lambaesis (Algeria)	chi-rho		*AE* 1992, no. 1885
323	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3257; *ICUR* 17425
326-333	M	Equizetum (Ouled Agla, Algeria)	chi-rho		*CIL VIII* 20607; *ILCV* 4
326-333	M	Tigava (El-Kherba, Algeria)	chi-rho		*AE* 2006, no. 1815

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
326-340	M	near Nattabutum (Ain Temlûka, Algeria)	chi-rho		*CIL VIII* 4824 = 22272; *ILCV* 6
329	R	Médiouna, Algeria	tau-rho		*CIL VIII* 21517; *ILCV* 2071
331	F	Rome (*coemeterium* Maius)	chi-rho	P	*ILCV* 1545; *ICUR* 21597
326-337	M	Tigava (El-Kherba, Algeria)	chi-rho (?)		*CIL VIII* 22578; *ILCV* 7b
336	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3252; *ICUR* 3159
337-350	WP	*Domus Faustae*, Rome (Lateran Palace)	chi-rho		Scrinari (1991), 164.
337-350	GR	Private collection	chi-rho		*AE* 2004, no. 1927
337-361	M	Tipasa (Tipaza, Algeria)	chi-rho		*AE* 2002, no.1709a; *CIL VIII* 22555; *ILCV* 10
338	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 1539; *ICUR* 7379
338	FS	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho	D; P	*ICUR* 8719
339	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	C	*ILCV* 4225; *ICUR* 45
341	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2816; *ICUR* 1420
341	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2999
341	F	Rome (catacombs of Saint Agnes)	chi-rho	B; V; W	*ICUR* 20769
343	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2571 = 2819; *ICUR* 8720

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
344	F	Ravenna, Italy	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2817; *ICUR* 21600
345	F	Tingi (Tangier, Morroco)	chi-rho		*AE* 1912, no. 9; *ILCV* 1470
345	F	Es-Sanamen, Syria	chi-rho		*AE* 1905, no. 215
346	F	Velitrae (Velletri, Italy)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2602; *ICUR* 3126
347	H	Paestum, Italy	chi-rho	C; D	*AE* 1990, no. 211
347	F	Montalcino, Italy	chi-rho		*CIL XI* 2599; *ILCV* 4544 add.
347	F	Lugdunum Convenarum (Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges, France)	chi-rho		*CIL XIII* 299
347	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3001; *ICUR* 17433
348	F	Rome (church of San Salvatore alle Coppelle)	chi-rho	D	*CIL VI* 33865; *ILCV* 748; *ICUR* 887
348	F	Rome (catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 15986
349	F	Satafis (Aïn El Kebira, Algeria)	chi-rho		*CIL VIII* 20301; *ILCV* 1684
349	F	Rome (catacombs of Saint Agnes)	chi-rho		*AE* 1902, no. 76; *ILCV* 2600; *ICUR* 20774
349	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2874; ICUR 23758.1
350	F	Anagnia, Italy	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2940A; *ICUR* 2596
350-353 (?)	M	Obori (?) (Sidi-Fredj, Algeria)	chi-rho		*CIL VIII* 22552; *ILCV* 9

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
352	F	Satafis (Aïn El Kebira, Algeria)	chi-rho	D	*CIL VIII* 20303; *ILCV* 3339
352	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2941
352	F	Rome (St. Peter's Basilica)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3252A; *ICUR* 4241
353	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3239; *ICUR* 13299
355	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	chi-rho (assumed)	AW; D	*ILCV* 2451; *ICUR* 8420
355	F	Rome (catacombs of Priscilla)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 4217
355	F	Rome (catacombs of Priscilla)	tau-rho	O	*ILCV 4331; ICUR* 24862
356	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	chi-rho	B; D	*ILCV* 3663; *ICUR* 6499
357	F	Abellinum (Atripalda, Italy)	chi-rho		*CIL X* 1191; *ILCV* 3352
358	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2941 add.; *ICUR* 1423 = 17437
358	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2976; *ICUR* 17438
358	F	Rome (catacombs of Saint Agnes)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3141; *ICUR* 20779
359	R	Tixter, Algeria	chi-rho		*CIL VIII* 20600; *ILCV* 2068
359	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 4399; *ICUR* 11757
359	F	Polimartium (Pianmiano, Italy)	chi-rho	P	*CIL XI* 3054
359	F	Rome (catacombs of Praetextatus)	chi-rho	B; P	*ICUR* 13908

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
359	F	Rome (catacombs of San Valentino)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 4435
360	FS	Salona (Split, Croatia)	chi-rho	C; V; O	*CIL III* 9504; *ILCV* 240
360	F	Capua, Italy	chi-rho	AW	*AE* 1901, no. 168
360	F	Rome (catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2941A; *ICUR* 16967
360	FS	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 13310
360	F	Rome (catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 16968
360	F (?)	Rome (catacombs of Saint Agnes)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 20782
361	FS	Rome (catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter)	chi-rho		*AE* 1985, no. 53
361	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2569; *ICUR* 6023
361	F	Ravenna, Italy	chi-rho		*ILCV* 4368; *ICUR* 2979
362	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2978B; *ICUR* 8421
363	F	Rome (cemetery of Saint Valentine)	chi-rho		*AE* 1906, no. 88
363	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 1327
363	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2941A add.; *ICUR* 1427
363	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	O; P; PS; S; W	*ILCV* 3359; *ICUR* 1426

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
363	F	Rome (catacombs of San Valentino)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 4410
364	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Hippolytus)	chi-rho	P	*ILCV* 2631A; *ICUR* 19953
364-365 (?)	M	Rusguniae (Matifou, Algeria)	chi-rho		*CIL VIII* 22551; *ILCV* 12
364-367 (?)	M	Tipasa (Tipaza, Algeria)	chi-rho		*CIL VIII* 22556; *ILCV* 13
364-367	H	Thamugadi (Timgad, Algeria)	tau-rho	AW	*AE* 1913, no. 25
365	F	Cusercoli, Italy	chi-rho		*ILCV* 1327A; *ICUR* 2695
365	F	Cyrene (Shahhat, Libya)	chi-rho		*AE* 1992, no. 1733
365	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	tau-rho	AW; D	*ILCV* 2926 add.; *ICUR* 6025
365-373	F	Rome (*coemeterium* Maius)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 21604
365-390	F	Rome (catacombs of Saint Pancrazio)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 1731
365-390 (or 425-455)	F	Rome (St. Paul's Basilica)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 4934
366	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW; WS	*ILCV* 2942; *ICUR* 1429
366	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3252B; *ICUR* 8723
366	F	Ostia, Italy	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 4343
367	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho	D; O	*ILCV* 2824; *ICUR* 6026
367	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 3943; *ICUR* 896

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
367	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho		*AE* 1905, no. 71; *ILCV* 3099 add.; *ICUR* 6028
367	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3253; *ICUR* 9563
367	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 12529
367	F	Rome (from the Via Latina)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 15768
367-375	GB	Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia)	chi-rho		*AE* 1889, no. 47; *CIL III* 8080; *ILCV* 935
368	F	Naples, Italy	tau-rho		*ILCV* 4393A; *ICUR* 2808
370	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 1297; *ICUR* 12421
370	F	Rome (catacombs of Pontianus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2603A; *ICUR* 4501
370	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 1478; *ICUR* 2087
370	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2795B add.; *ICUR* 3179
370	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho; tau-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2944; *ICUR* 12530
370	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2945
370	F	Rome (from the Via Latina)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 4146; *ICUR* 15769
370	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 3180
370 (or 373)	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 17462

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
371	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2353A; *ICUR* 6031
371	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2968
371	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2968 add.; *ICUR* 1432
371	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 4258; *ICUR* 3181
371	F	Naples, Italy	tau-rho	AW; C	*ILCV* 4351; *ICUR* 2809
371	F	Rome (catacombs of Apronianus)	chi-rho	AW	*AE* 1940, no. 161; *ICUR* 15502
371	F	Capua, Italy	chi-rho		*CIL X* 4488
372	FRT	Rome (catacombs of St. Felicity)	chi-rho	AW; C; D	*ILCV* 2795B add.; *ICUR* 23412
372	F	Rome (catacombs of Generosa)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 4748
372	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Felicity)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 23413
373	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho		*ILCV* 4458; *ICUR* 2092 ; *IGC* 115
373	F	Rome (catacombs of Generosa)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2795B add.
373	F	Rome (from the Via Appia)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 13107
375	FS	Salona (Split, Croatia)	tau-rho		*ILCV* 3835B
375	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 4258A; *ICUR* 8725

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
375	F	Rome (church of St. Zenonis)	chi-rho	P; O	*ICUR* 6009
375	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho	D	*ICUR* 8726
375	FS	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*CIL VI* 32045a; *ILCV* 95 add.; *ICUR* 13109
375	F	Rome (catacombs of Priscilla)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 24867
376	F	Capua, Italy	chi-rho		*CIL X* 4489; *ILCV* 2932 add.
376	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 1328; *ICUR* 9568
376	F	Rome (from the Via Appia)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 4219; *ICUR* 11769
376 (or 378)	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho	C	*ICUR* 17469
377	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho	AW	*ILCV* 1515; *ICUR* 12532
377	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 4400; *ICUR* 17471
377	F	Rome (from the Via Latina)	chi-rho	AW; D	*ICUR* 15772
377	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Felicity)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 23416
377	B	Sedunum (Sion, Switzerland)	chi-rho	AW	*CIL XII* 138; *ILCV* 281
377 (?)	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 3187
377 (or 383)	F	Pisaurum (Pesaro, Italy)	chi-rho	W	*ILCV 4144B; ICUR* 2944
378	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho	C; D	*ILCV* 2945A; *ICUR* 1436

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
378	FS	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho	AW	*ILCV* 4378
378	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 11772
379	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho	AW; D; WS	*ILCV* 2969A; *ICUR* 17473
379	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW; C	*ILCV* 4354; *ICUR* 1437
379-382	H	Ostia, Italy	tau-rho		*CIL XIV* 1875; *ILCV* 91; *ILS* 1292
380	F	Teanum (Teano, Italy)	chi-rho	AW; P	*AE* 1908, no. 219*; ILCV* 2883 add.
380	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Hippolytus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3574; *ICUR* 19959
380	F	Rome (St. Peter's Basilica)	chi-rho; tau-rho	AW	*CIL VI* 31972; *ICUR* 4166
381	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 9572
381	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 4356*; ICUR* 17476
382	F	Rome (from Via Tiburtina)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 2564; *ICUR* 20603
382	F	Carthage, Tunisia	chi-rho		*AE* 1997, no. 1648
382	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 13115
383	F	Altava (Lamoricière, Algeria)	chi-rho		*CIL VIII* 21767; *ILCV* 2859
383	F	Rome (from the Via Appia)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 4191; *ICUR* 15353
383	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 13116

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
383	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	tau-rho	AW	*ILCV* 3797C; *ICUR* 17482
384	F	Sitifis (Setif, Algeria)	tau-rho	AW	*CIL VIII* 20412; *ILCV* 2442
384	FS	Spoletium (Spoleto, Italy)	chi-rho; tau-rho		*CIL XI* 4968; *ILCV* 2169
384	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Hippolytus)	chi-rho	AW; W	*ILCV* 2819A; *ICUR* 19963
384	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 8426
384	F	Rome (from the Via Latina)	chi-rho	D	*ILCV* 3003; *ICUR* 15776
384 (or 388)	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3287A
385	F	Vindobona (Vienna, Italy)	chi-rho	D; W	*ILCV* 1480; *ICUR* 3202
385	F	Rome (from the Via Appia)	tau-rho	AW	*ICUR* 1441
386	H	Ostia, Italy	chi-rho		*CIL XIV* 231; *ILCV* 398
386	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho	AW	*ICUR* 3177
386 (or 422)	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2946
387	B	Oretum, Tarraconensis (Granátula de Calatrava, Spain)	chi-rho		*CIL II* 3222; *ILCV* 2243
387	FM	Kaoussie (near Antioch, Syria)	tau-rho	O	*AE* 1938, no. 174
387 (or 388)	F	Milan, Italy	chi-rho		*CIL V* 6243; *ILCV* 4398

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
388	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	tau-rho	AW	*AE* 1905, no. 80; *ILCV* 2795C = 4146D; *ICUR* 6045
388	F	Rome (St. Paul's Basilica)	chi-rho	D	*ILCV* 2795C add.; *ICUR* 4820
388	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 6506
389	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	chi-rho; tau-rho	AW; D	*ILCV* 2970; *ICUR* 17497
389	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho	AW; B; O	*AE* 1979, no. 43
390	RC	Rome (St. Paul's Basilica)	tau-rho	AW	*ILCV* 1857; *ICUR* 4778a
390	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho	AW	ILCV 4215; ICUR 6049
390	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Felicity)	chi-rho	AW; D	*ICUR* 23426
391	F	Aquileia, Italy	chi-rho	P	*AE* 1982, no. 386
392	F	Rome (catacombs of Saint Pancrazio)	tau-rho		*ICUR* 4271b; *IGC* 100
392	F	Fabrateria Nova (Falvaterra, Italy)	chi-rho	AW	*CIL X* 5646; *ILCV* 2935A
392	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho	AW; F	*ICUR* 1355
392	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 6052
392	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho		*CIL VI* 31935; *ILCV* 300; *ICUR* 3211
392-395	DT	Rome (St. Paul's Basilica)	chi-rho	AW	*CIL VI* 33895; *ILCV* 1763; *ICUR* 4779

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
393	F	Tarraco, Hispania Citerior (Tarragona, Spain)	chi-rho; tau-rho	AW; C	*AE* 1938, no. 25; *CIL II.14.4* 2095
393	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	tau-rho	AW	*ICUR* 8429
393	F	Rome (catacombs of Domitilla)	chi-rho	AW; O	*ICUR* 8430
393 (or 394)	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho		*ILCV* 4556
394	F	Bononia (Bologna, Italy)	chi-rho	AW	*CIL XI* 802; ILCV 1494
394	F	Turris Libisonis (Porto Torres, Italy)	chi-rho	AW; P	*AE* 1992, no. 902
395	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho; tau-rho	AW	*AE* 1906, no. 82; *ILCV* 2606; *ICUR* 6053
395	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	tau-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2926 add.
395	F	Rome (from the Via Latina)	tau-rho	AW; C; D	*AE* 1994, no. 286; *ICUR* 15778
395	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho	AW; P	*AE* 2006, no. 240
395	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Hippolytus)	chi-rho	AW; P; O	*ICUR* 19977
396	F	Rome (catacombs of Saint Agnes)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 20810
397	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3091A; *ICUR* 12423
397	F	Capua, Italy	chi-rho	AW	*CIL X* 4493; *ILCV* 2932A
397	F	Rome (catacomb of Cyriaca)	tau-rho	P	*ILCV* 2777; *ICUR* 17511
397	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Hippolytus)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 2927; *ICUR* 19978

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
397	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho; tau-rho	D; W	*ILCV* 166 = 3444; *ICUR* 941
397	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	tau-rho		*ILCV* 4146E add.; *ICUR* 2108
398	F	Rome (catacombs of San Valentino)	chi-rho		*ILCV* 3058
398-407	G	Milan (?), Italy	chi-rho; tau-rho		*ILCV* 15; Spier 752
399	F	Capua, Italy	chi-rho	AW	*CIL X* 4493a; *ILCV* 2958
399	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho	AW	*ILCV* 4400B; *ICUR* 309
399	F	Rome (church of Santi Quattro Coronati)	tau-rho		*CIL VI* 32069; *ICUR* 987
399	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 6476
383-388	H	Agginum, Aquitania (Agen, France)	chi-rho	AW; C	*CIL XIII* 921a-c; *ILCV* 921
400	F	Aeclanum (Mirabella Eclano, Italy)	tau-rho		*CIL IX* 1363; *ILCV* 3601
400	F	Rome (from the Via Latina)	chi-rho	F; O	*ILCV* 4942; *ICUR* 15780
401	F	Comum (Como, Italy)	chi-rho	AW	*CIL V.2* (number not given, page 1060)
401	FS	Volsinii (Bolsena, Italy)	chi-rho		*CIL XI* 2872; *ILCV* 2258
401	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 6061
401 (?)	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	tau-rho	AW	*ICUR* 6062
402	F	Rome (uncertain origins)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 4054 = 5717

Date	Type of Inscription	Location	Type of Symbol	Other Symbols	Reference
402	F	Rome (from the Via Appia)	chi-rho	AW; O	*ILCV* 2974; *ICUR* 15356
402	F	Milan, Italy	tau-rho		*CIL V* 6224; *ILCV* 1501
404	F	Cluana (Civitanova Marche, Italy)	chi-rho	AW	*AE* 1990, no. 310
404 (?)	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	chi-rho	AW	*ICUR* 10854
404 (or 407 or 409 or 412)	F	Rome (St. Paul's Basilica)	chi-rho		*CIL VI* 9313; *ICUR* 4852
405	F	Burdigala (Bordeaux, France)	chi-rho	AW	*CIL XIII* 912; *ILCV* 3040
405	F	Rome (catacombs of Commodilla)	chi-rho	AW	*AE* 1905, no. 85; *ICUR* 6066
405	F	Rome (catacombs of St. Hippolytus)	chi-rho		*ICUR* 19981
406	F	Castellum Tingitanum (Chlef, Algeria)	chi-rho	AW; C	*CIL VIII* 9715; *ILCV* 2186
407	F	Rome (catacombs of Callixtus)	tau-rho		*ICUR* 10855
407	F	Rome (via Ardeatina)	tau-rho		*AE* 1998, no. 225
407 and 408	F	Rome (Piazza San Lorenzo)	tau-rho	AW	*AE* 2005, no. 215
408	F	Mechra Sfa, Algeria	chi-rho	AW	*CIL VIII* 21555; *ILCV* 3205A add.
408	F	Ostia, Italy	chi-rho	AW	*CIL XIV* 1946; *ILCV* 2801
408	F	Rome (catacombs of Saint Agnes)	tau-rho	AW; O	*ILCV* 808; *ICUR* 20815

APPENDIX C

Table C1. A list of all the chi-rhos and tau-rhos in the *ICUR*.

	All Numbers
Chi-rho	44; 45; 48; 79; 111; 164.6; 183; 196; 215; 270; 309; 326; 342; 397; 419; 468; 495; 498; 516; 538; 559; 560; 569; 607; 614; 623; 644; 652; 711; 801; 805; 818; 823; 827; 846; 887; 896; 898; 929; 941; 943; 962; 1029; 1051; 1054; 1056; 1065; 1094.8; 1096.2; 1151; 1152; 1158; 1159; 1167; 1176; 1190; 1191; 1192; 1198; 1204; 1207; 1289; 1291; 1300; 1320; 1344.5; 1363; 1365; 1369; 1378; 1389; 1390.4; 1394.15; 1396; 1414.2; 1420; 1423; 1426; 1427; 1429; 1432; 1437; 1473; 1478; 1480; 1488; 1489; 1491; 1501; 1508; 1513; 1514; 1532; 1538; 1542; 1552; 1555; 1556; 1559; 1560; 1574; 1576; 1584; 1585; 1590; 1601; 1602; 1607; 1610; 1614; 1615; 1617; 1624; 1627; 1628; 1629; 1632; 1633; 1637; 1640; 1642; 1647; 1657; 1659; 1664; 1668; 1672; 1688; 1689; 1696; 1702; 1708; 1720; 1729; 1757; 1759; 1760; 1762; 1780; 1781; 1782; 1783; 1791; 1795; 1799; 1803; 1806; 1809; 1822; 1836; 1838.1; 1839.1; 1841; 1842; 1848.2; 1853; 1896; 1900; 1969; 1976; 1981; 1982; 1985; 1991; 2002; 2009; 2020; 2023; 2026; 2033; 2038; 2044; 2045.2; 2047.10; 2052; 2064; 2068; 2077; 2087; 2129; 2143; 2144; 2146; 2166; 2176; 2179; 2182; 2190; 2199; 2213; 2224; 2240; 2241; 2243; 2253; 2265; 2278; 2291; 2293; 2298; 2302; 2314; 2317; 2321; 2330; 2334; 2335; 2360; 2363; 2372; 2374; 2375; 2380; 2384; 2402; 2412; 2415; 2424; 2427; 2428; 2440; 2442; 2471; 2474; 2481; 2503; 2521; 2575; 2580; 2596; 2607; 2623; 2624; 2634; 2638.2; 2649; 2654; 2655; 2669; 2675; 2684; 2685; 2695; 2698; 2700; 2706; 2724; 2731; 2732; 2733; 2734; 2743; 2748; 2753; 2765; 2774; 2777; 2781; 2801; 2826; 2827; 2833; 2837; 2852; 2864; 2867; 2874; 2880; 2884; 2894; 2901; 2902; 2903; 2912; 2927; 2930; 2932; 2933; 2934; 2938; 2939; 2942; 2944; 2957; 2969; 2971; 2973; 2979; 2991; 2993; 2995; 3001; 3009; 3011; 3016; 3023; 3030; 3065; 3085; 3090; 3098; 3105; 3118; 3120-1 (sic); 3126; 3146; 3159; 3179; 3180; 3181; 3187; 3202; 3262; 3263; 3276; 3283; 3288; 3291; 3307; 3314; 3317; 3319; 3346; 3348; 3354; 3355; 3362; 3363; 3370; 3375; 3403; 3409; 3422; 3423; 3436; 3447; 3457; 3470; 3473; 3474; 3489; 3491; 3495; 3496; 3510; 3512; 3516; 3524; 3525; 3529; 3532; 3535; 3545; 3547; 3548; 3549; 3560; 3565; 3569; 3571; 3572; 3575; 3583; 3589; 3591; 3593; 3601; 3603; 3611; 3640; 3642; 3646; 3647; 3648; 3652; 3661; 3663; 3667; 3671; 3673; 3677; 3683; 3685; 3686; 3700; 3702; 3704; 3714; 3723; 3735; 3742; 3746; 3748; 3755; 3770; 3780; 3788; 3791.2; 3796; 3800; 3813; 3816; 3820; 3821; 3824; 3827; 3829; 3836; 3839; 3840; 3845; 3862; 3865; 3866; 3867; 3869; 3877; 3879; 3880; 3888; 3889; 3895; 3928; 3942; 3956.7; 3961; 3964; 3972; 3987; 4001; 4031; 4054; 4060; 4066; 4067; 4077; 4166; 4194; 4206; 4215a; 4228; 4241; 4248; 4265; 4296; 4298; 4339; 4344; 4348; 4368; 4372; 4378; 4381; 4397; 4407a; 4411; 4423; 4456; 4462; 4473; 4474; 4486; 4501; 4551; 4582; 4589; 4599; 4636; 4687; 4688; 4704; 4723b; 4748; 4769; 4778e; 4779; 4794; 4820; 4852; 4926; 4934; 5053; 5194; 5412; 5432; 5457; 5533; 5581; 5587; 5652b; 5717; 5752; 5776; 5778d; 5846; 5895; 5941; 5942; 5946; 5951; 5959; 5962; 5964; 6003; 6009; 6023; 6026; 6028; 6031; 6049; 6052; 6053; 6061; 6066; 6094; 6096; 6101; 6102; 6108; 6117; 6118; 6124; 6126; 6148; 6152; 6156; 6157; 6164; 6170; 6201; 6221; 6226; 6228; 6235; 6239; 6249; 6259a; 6259b; 6263; 6275; 6279; 6283; 6297; 6298; 6303; 6304; 6308; 6314; 6316; 6323; 6327; 6335; 6349; 6356; 6372; 6451; 6454; 6459; 6476; 6480; 6483; 6488; 6491; 6493; 6499; 6506; 6517; 6521; 6542; 6552; 6600a; 6614; 6629; 6635a; 6643; 6650; 6656; 6660; 6661b; 6706; 6709; 6735; 6746; 6759; 6819; 6841; 6848; 6850; 6855; 6874; 6883; 6889; 6899; 6913; 6921; 6976c; 6979; 7003; 7007; 7009; 7013; 7014; 7021; 7033b; 7063; 7067; 7083c; 7088c; 7093; 7094b; 7101; 7104; 7105d; 7106; 7111; 7112; 7117; 7135b; 7140c; 7146b; 7148a; 7153e; 7194; 7249; 7279; 7280; 7293a; 7293b; 7379; 7459; 7474; 7571g; 7576; 7607; 7630; 7677b; 7704d; 7722; 7794a; 7832; 7869; 7934a; 7982; 7987a; 8015; 8016a; 8016b; 8029; 8089b; 8091a; 8091b; 8135; 8189; 8205; 8215; 8271; 8275; 8288; 8297a; 8316; 8322b; 8396; 8410b; 8420; 8421; 8426; 8430; 8442; 8451; 8453; 8510a; 8518; 8522; 8526; 8527; 8537b; 8542; 8555; 8557; 8562; 8572; 8579; 8581; 8584; 8594; 8600; 8606; 8671; 8673; 8674; 8675a; 8680; 8681; 8694g; 8695; 8719; 8720; 8723; 8725; 8726; 8738; 8755; 8790; 8792; 8808; 8813; 8814; 8818; 8822; 8830; 8837; 8841; 8842; 8852; 8855; 8876; 8879; 8882; 8889; 8899; 8909; 8910; 8912; 8924; 8933; 8943; 8945; 8949; 8953/8954; 8972; 8989; 8995; 9002; 9007; 9013; 9016; 9021; 9041; 9047; 9048; 9055; 9058; 9062; 9071; 9075; 9081; 9085; 9104; 9105; 9107; 9139; 9148; 9162; 9163; 9167; 9189; 9193; 9194; 9196; 9205; 9206; 9213; 9214; 9217; 9222; 9231; 9236; 9247; 9251; 9259; 3274; 9275; 9319; 9332; 9351; 9359; 9361; 9386; 9394; 9427; 9431; 9522; 9523; 9524; 9542; 9544; 9545e; 9563; 9567; 9568; 9572; 9589a; 9597; 9614; 9632; 9648; 9659; 9661a; 9675; 9690; 9696; 9707; 9740; 9772; 9786; 9787; 9794; 9801; 9804; 9828; 9842; 9843; 9845; 9850a; 9860; 9861; 9870; 9884b; 9893; 9906; 9908; 9922; 9923; 9936b; 9945; 9957b; 9958; 9965a; 9966; 9970; 9980; 9997; 10024; 10036; 10054e; 10088; 10171c; 10172; 10186; 10188a; 10238d; 10273; 10279; 10280; 10289; 10300; 10305; 10315a; 10342b; 10345n; 10354a; 10356e; 10390o; 10395b; 10421; 10424b; 10426; 10428b; 10474a; 10474b; 10474c; 10483b; 10484b; 10486d; 10494; 10513b; 10826; 10829; 10830; 10854; 10857a; 10860; 10876; 10885; 10907; 10914; 10924; 10941; 10944; 10964; 10969; 10973; 11025q; 11038; 11056b; 11063b; 11151; 11234; 11241; 11319; 11362; 11371; 11396; 11407; 11409; 11426b; 11447; 11451; 11452h; 11454; 11476a; 11500i; 11610a; 11633b; 11634b; 11725a; 11725b; 11725c; 11725d; 11725e; 11757; 11769; 11772; 11788a; 11796; 11808; 11825b; 11847; 11849; 11859; 11861; 11863; 11874; 11878; 11879; 11884; 11885; 11890; 11914; 11920; 11922; 11924; 11926; 11944; 11955; 11956; 11968; 11972; 11974; 11990b; 12022; 12025; 12027; 12030; 12039; 12041; 12046; 12048; 12053; 12069; 12070a; 12070c; 12072; 12073; 12077a; 12077b; 12114b; 12121; 12122c; 12123b; 12139b; 12140l; 12148a; 12152a; 12154b; 12177g; 12180; 12185; 12200; 12223a; 12223b; 12258; 12266; 12277; 12278; 12306; 12309; 12319; 12324; 12331; 12335; 12337a; 12345; 12352; 12356; 12403; 12405; 12411; 12421; 12423; 12436; 12442; 12464; 12467; 12470; 12485; 12493; 12498; 12504; 12529; 12530; 12561; 12566; 12584; 12592; 12609b; 12623; 12627; 12628; 12633b; 12643; 12650; 12652; 12659; 12672; 12677; 12679; 12685; 12710; 12711; 12712; 12740; 12743; 12752; 12754; 12763; 12774a; 12776; 12777; 12786; 12799; 12805; 12819d; 12823; 12872d; 12879; 13094; 13107; 13109; 13115; 13116; 13127; 13144; 13150; 13169; 13174; 13175; 13176; 13180; 13182; 13193; 13197; 13205; 13226; 13228; 13229; 13249b; 13256f; 13280; 13299; 13310; 13446; 13476; 13490; 13499; 13513a; 13529; 13561; 13641; 13642; 13644; 13661; 13677c; 13773c; 13797s; 13812; 13878; 13908; 13967; 13983; 14007; 14013; 14039; 14079; 14087; 14088; 14118b; 14121; 14156; 14177; 14183a; 14204; 14209; 14234; 14254; 14293; 14309; 14332; 14333; 14372; 14399; 14406; 14411; 14412; 14414; 14427; 14429; 14443; 14452; 14467; 14470; 14497; 14501; 14504; 14536; 14543; 14544; 14546; 14571; 14601; 14613; 14631; 14640; 14672; 14688; 14694; 14697; 14715; 14736; 14773d; 14778; 14796; 14813; 14840b; 14864; 14887; 14889c; 14895a; 14903c; 14913; 14915h; 14948d; 15179b; 15182d; 15183a;

	All Numbers
Chi-rho (cont.)	15283; 15316b; 15316d; 15331; 15341; 15353; 15356; 15364; 15376; 15385; 15391; 15410; 15413; 15417; 15445; 15453; 15460; 15468; 15469; 15470; 15472; 15485; 15502; 15514b; 15524; 15530; 15536; 15581; 15602; 15603; 15604; 15605; 15613; 15620; 15648; 15677; 15687; 15703; 15712; 15732; 15739; 15764; 15768; 15769; 15772; 15776; 15780; 15793; 15805; 15820; 15823; 15827; 15841; 15849; 15851; 15858; 15868; 15898; 15920; 15924; 15926b; 15927; 15936c; 15939; 15954; 15962a; 15962c; 15984a; 15986; 16033; 16047; 16065; 16081a; 16090; 16105; 16107; 16112; 16113; 16122; 16169; 16202; 16235a; 16239; 16241g; 16246; 16271; 16277; 16294a; 16302; 16304; 16305; 16311; 16331; 16341; 16370; 16371; 16398; 16420; 16435; 16446; 16457; 16459; 16466a; 16486; 16494; 16521b; 16523; 16526a; 16538; 16570; 16575; 16610a; 16615b; 16623; 16647; 16678g; 16693; 16696; 16710c; 16723; 16752; 16766c; 16776e; 16785g; 16790e; 16794; 16825; 16876d; 16903; 16967; 16968; 16972; 16978; 16989; 16997; 16999; 17001; 17002; 17010; 17012; 17018; 17061; 17089; 17116; 17120; 17124; 17129; 17132; 17153a; 17154; 17155; 17158; 17167; 17187; 17193; 17195; 17217; 17220; 17256; 17274; 17304; 17307; 17317; 17325; 17334; 17340; 17342a' 17348; 17349; 17351; 17362a; 17362b; 17365d; 17384; 17389; 17391; 17394e; 17425; 17433; 17437; 17438; 17462; 17469; 17471; 17473; 17476; 17497; 17544; 17673; 17715; 17717; 17729; 17743; 17762; 17764; 17765; 17778; 17783; 17785; 17796d; 17815l 17822; 17845; 17852; 17858; 17873; 17874d; 17902; 17908; 17911; 17916; 17934; 17937; 17954; 17957; 17961; 17963; 17965; 17993; 18000; 18002; 18028; 18030; 18040; 18043; 18068b; 18069; 18080; 18086; 18092; 18130; 18140; 18150; 18151; 18161b; 18175a; 18197; 18232a; 18257b; 18283; 18284h; 18287a; 18306l; 18309b; 18352n; 18364d; 18387; 18391; 18407; 18411/18412a; 18414; 18420; 18432; 18454; 18459; 18460; 18464; 18482; 18505; 18506; 18515; 18517; 18518; 18519; 18525; 18543; 18547; 18552; 18558; 18571; 18573; 18585; 18589; 18590; 18610a; 18618; 18619; 18628; 18643; 18650; 18656; 18658; 18668; 18673; 18678; 18693; 18695; 18717; 18718; 18723; 18736; 18747; 18753; 18755; 18768; 18775; 18781; 18789; 18807; 18829; 18833; 18839; 18844; 18855; 18881; 18900; 18903; 18916; 18921; 18926; 18932; 18933; 18946; 18978; 18989; 19001; 19002; 19006; 19018; 19034; 19043; 19059; 19062; 19066; 19069; 19078; 19084; 19088; 19093; 19099; 19107; 19108; 19123; 19142; 19145; 19164; 19166; 19175; 19176; 19177; 19178; 19188; 19196; 19217; 19228; 19247a; 19263; 19266; 19281; 19285; 19288; 19295; 19335; 19348; 19355; 19368; 19374; 19381; 19382; 19392; 19402; 19403; 19404; 19407; 19426; 19447; 19448; 19452; 19462; 19477a; 19482; 19486; 19497; 19502; 19506; 19511; 19519; 19523; 19529; 19533; 19539; 19554; 19557; 19563; 19584b; 19589c; 19593; 19608; 19678; 19684; 19699b; 19711c; 19768; 19787; 19793; 19794; 19800; 19814; 19823; 19824; 19858; 19875a; 19953; 19959; 19963; 19977; 19978; 19981; 20008; 20018; 20026; 20042b; 20045; 20048a/20048a'; 20050; 20056d; 20057; 20059; 20062; 20064; 20065; 20068; 20074; 20081; 20083; 20087; 20095; 20104; 20105; 20108; 20109; 20118; 20122; 20127; 20131a; 20135; 20136; 20141; 20142; 20143; 20162; 20192; 20198; 20206; 20228b; 20229; 20234a; 20241; 20249c; 20258b; 20288; 20300; 20371; 20400; 20412; 20435; 20437; 20438; 20495; 20498; 20499; 20513; 20529; 20603; 20614; 20619; 20629; 20630; 20643; 20652; 20668; 20672; 20673; 20685; 20689; 20698; 20715; 20732; 20760; 20761; 20769; 20774; 20779; 20782; 20807a; 20810; 20865; 20868; 20872; 20884; 20889; 20898; 20906; 20910; 20932; 20948; 20964; 20970; 21004; 21010; 21011; 21013; 21015; 21034; 21041; 21046; 21059; 21069; 21071; 21073; 21075; 21076; 21080; 21087; 21088; 21090; 21094; 21099c; 21101; 21106; 21116; 21134a'; 21135; 21145c; 21150; 21161b; 21164; 21175a; 21196; 21205; 21206; 21207; 21245; 21253; 21260; 21280; 21282; 21290; 21313; 21328; 21330; 21339; 21340; 21341; 21345; 21355; 21359; 21395; 21426a; 21453; 21454; 21462a; 21471a; 21475; 21479b; 21482; 21484; 21499b; 21525; 21537b; 21564a; 21564b; 21591; 21597; 21600; 21604; 21652; 21653; 21657; 21667; 21692; 21697; 21702a'; 21705; 21715; 21726; 21730d; 21803; 21873; 21900b; 21939; 21952a; 21962; 21974; 21981; 21991; 22013; 22015; 22022; 22040; 22125b; 22158; 22171; 22235; 22243e; 22258a; 22262; 22263; 22266; 22274; 22298s; 22303a; 22316; 22324; 22359; 22369; 22370; 22394; 22395; 22408; 22409; 22437; 22442; 22448; 22478a; 22480; 22509; 22515; 22519; 22531; 22540; 22566; 22589; 22607; 22618; 22626; 22677; 22685; 22689; 22700; 22783; 22789; 22865; 22909m; 22915; 22916d; 22916f; 22994; 22999; 23015; 23030; 23031; 23053; 23077; 23099b; 23119; 23131; 23132; 23133; 23154; 23159; 23168; 23173; 23192b; 23203; 23205; 23208; 23219; 23232.3; 23244; 23245a; 23252; 23266; 23269; 23274; 23288; 23293; 23294; 23296; 23306; 23314; 23315; 23324; 23412; 23413; 23416; 23426; 23459e; 23464; 23465; 23477; 23489; 23498b; 23498c; 23503; 23510; 23512; 23516; 23517; 23521; 23527; 23528; 23530; 23534; 23556; 23571; 23578; 23579; 23582; 23583; 23589; 23591; 23596; 23600; 23608; 23616; 23630; 23634; 23635; 23638; 23690b; 23695; 23714a; 23728g
Tau-rho	42; 317; 417; 428; 735; 814; 922; 941; 987; 1013; 1355; 1436; 1441; 1481; 1594; 1660; 1870; 2000; 2018; 2045.5; 2045.6; 2092; 2108; 2265; 2305; 2309; 2375; 2410; 2440; 2559; 2736; 2784; 2808; 2809; 3087.7; 3092; 3114; 3177; 3211; 3305; 3450; 3483; 3630; 3653; 3689; 3741; 3921; 3979.1; 3986; 4004; 4166; 4213; 4217b; 4285; 4391; 4430b; 4434; 4448; 4609; 4778a; 4890; 5110a; 5191; 5219; 5432; 5457; 5570; 5630e; 5693; 5732; 5836; 5843; 5919c; 6025; 6045; 6053; 6062; 6074; 6081; 6152; 6163; 6173; 6225; 6278; 6300; 6305; 6324; 6369; 6399; 6407; 6412; 6422; 6432c; 6484; 6490; 6491; 6494; 6524; 6713a; 7154a; 7862a; 8048; 8110a; 8404; 8409c; 8429; 8495; 8650; 8663; 8670; 8683; 8694e; 8701a; 8705; 8803; 8917; 8917; 8976; 9081; 9106; 9160; 9166; 9540; 9845; 9919; 9999; 10579; 10855; 10991; 11038; 11157; 11174; 11479; 11727d; 11746b; 11895b; 11926; 12135b; 12255; 12268; 12270; 12280; 12367; 12399; 12415b; 12473; 12488; 12532; 12533; 12828; 12851; 13129; 13251a; 13415; 13431; 13559; 13672b; 13861a; 14291; 14369; 14396; 14408; 14429; 14700; 14967r; 15405; 15420; 15454; 15566; 15679; 15736; 15778; 15848a; 15907; 15941; 15958; 15960; 15967; 15982; 16182; 16292; 16643; 16781a; 17263; 17482; 18497; 17511; 17554; 17610; 17646; 17667c; 17704g; 17708; 17778; 17808; 17850; 17930; 18095; 18200b; 18255; 18257a; 18318b; 18455; 18520; 18530; 18590; 18622; 18802; 18805; 18818; 18850; 18908a; 18937; 19036; 19166; 19321; 19325; 19406; 19527; 19604; 19812; 19827; 19942c; 19988; 20010; 20047; 20093; 20120; 20139; 20143; 20225e; 20225e; 20259; 20302b; 20313; 20437; 20630; 20815; 20908; 21163; 21175b; 21189; 21280; 21337; 21480a; 21504a'; 21982a; 22266; 22535; 22709; 22719; 22738; 22962; 23024; 23185; 23185a; 23451; 23480a; 23508a; 23548b; 23555; 23594; 23643; 23722a; 23731f; 23747

Table C2. A list of all the chi-rhos and tau-rhos in the *ICUR* in inscriptions with other motifs.

Motif Type	Chi-rho		Tau-rho
Dove/Bird	79; 823; 887; 896; 929; 941; 943; 1300; 1378; 1396; 1576; 1590; 1640; 1642; 1702; 1708; 1757; 1780; 1782; 1822; 1836; 1841; 1842; 1848.2; 1969; 1981; 2026; 2038; 2064; 2077; 2240; 2253; 2360; 2384; 2481; 2521; 2575; 2607; 2624; 2638.2; 2684; 2733; 2777; 2826; 2867; 2971; 3001; 3085; 3202; 2062; 3283; 3317; 3319; 3355; 3375; 3572; 3583; 3770; 3827; 4372; 4407a; 4820; 5776; 6026; 6101; 6156; 6221; 6297; 6499; 6841; 7105d; 7249; 7474; 7607; 7704d; 7987a; 8205; 8410b; 8451; 8522; 8562; 8719; 8726; 8879; 8909; 8912; 9002; 9205; 9247; 9544; 9614; 9648; 9787; 10273; 10289; 10421; 11241; 11371; 11849; 11878; 11920; 11944; 11974; 12048; 12123b; 12331; 12498; 12561; 12584; 12643; 12652; 12659; 12712; 12777; 12879; 13229; 14039; 14372; 14546; 14571; 14903c; 14915h; 15316b; 15364; 15469; 15613; 15772; 15776; 15793; 15827; 16113; 16246; 16302; 16457; 16989; 17116; 17132; 17473; 17544; 17783; 17873; 17957; 18086; 18092; 18283; 18460; 18464; 18571; 18589; 18628; 18673; 18903; 18989; 19006; 19062; 19069; 19228; 19539; 19557; 19678; 19800; 20104; 20192; 20198; 20288; 20371; 20513; 20910; 21010; 21080; 21090; 21164; 21175a; 21260; 21341; 21359; 21453; 21475; 21484; 21939; 22370; 22409; 22448; 22480; 22515; 22677; 22789; 23119; 23252; 23306; 23412; 23426; 23931; 25144; 25206; 25359; 27023		941; 1436; 2309; 2559; 3653; 4213; 6025; 6081; 6225; 6300; 6422; 8110a; 8404; 8429; 9999; 13861a; 15778; 17646; 18257a; 18318b; 18455; 18937; 19812; 20120; 21163; 23987
Wreath/ Circle	45; 941; 962; 1152; 1158; 1320; 1394.15; 1429; 1437; 1473; 1480; 1555; 1614; 1632; 1720; 1759; 1803; 1841; 1848.2; 2143; 2293; 2503; 2521; 2607; 2684; 2733; 2781; 2867; 2944; 3001; 3146; 3202; 3263; 3363; 3560; 3603; 3700; 3972; 4060; 4067; 4368; 4372; 4407a; 4462; 5959; 5964; 6226; 6249; 6327; 6335; 6488; 7021; 7982; 8442; 8522; 8879; 8882; 8943; 9055; 9058; 9205; 9231; 9524; 9794; 10054e; 10395b; 10483b; 10885; 10914; 10941; 11241; 11409; 11451; 11454; 11825b; 11849; 11885; 12152a; 12331; 12467; 12652; 12743; 12786; 12819d; 13983; 14039; 14254; 14429; 14497; 14694; 14864; 15182d; 15410; 15413; 15602; 15604; 15820; 15920; 16989; 17132; 17469; 17473; 17544; 17852; 17874d; 17937; 18130; 18407; 18420; 18454; 18515; 18519; 18571; 18590; 18628; 18717; 18989; 19166; 19228; 19426; 19462; 19678; 19875a; 19963; 20056d; 20064; 20141; 20437; 20513; 20760; 20761; 20769; 20898; 21046; 21175a; 21981; 22394; 22677; 22994; 23412; 23489; 23556; 23578; 23583; 23608		941; 1355; 1436; 3092; 3921; 4213; 4890; 6225; 6490; 8409c; 8976; 12488; 13129; 14396; 14429; 15454; 15778; 18255; 18590; 18850; 19166; 20259; 20437; 21175b; 21480a; 22535; 22709; 23508a; 23643
in pace	44; 45; 79; 111; 196; 270; 309; 498; 559; 560; 569; 614; 623; 644; 652; 801; 827; 846; 887; 898; 929; 941; 943; 1054; 1065; 1152; 1167; 1204; 1289; 1291; 1300; 1365; 1378; 1542; 1552; 1576; 1584; 1585; 1590; 1602; 1610; 1614; 1615; 1617; 1624; 1627; 1628; 1629; 1657; 1672; 1688; 1689; 1702; 1708; 1757; 1760; 1762; 1780; 1781; 1782; 1783; 1791; 1806; 1809; 1853; 1896; 1969; 2002; 2026; 2033; 2038; 2044; 2045.2; 2087; 2143; 2166; 2176; 2224; 2240; 2241; 2265; 2278; 2291; 2302; 2314; 2335; 2360; 2363; 2372; 2374; 2375; 2384; 2428; 2471; 2603; 2521; 2575; 2596; 2624; 2634; 2675; 2684; 2695; 2700; 2733; 2734; 2743; 2753; 2781; 2826; 2827; 2874; 2880; 2901; 2903; 2912; 2932; 2933; 2957; 2969; 2991; 3016; 3023; 3030; 3085; 3126; 3180; 3202; 3276; 3288; 3291; 3307 (= 23795); 3348; 3354; 3355; 3363; 3370; 3375; 3403; 3409; 3422; 3436; 3447; 3470; 3491; 3495; 3496; 3510; 3525; 3529; 3535; 3545; 3547; 3548; 3549; 3569; 3571; 3572; 3575; 3591; 3593; 3603; 3611; 3640; 3646; 3661 (= 24051); 3663; 3671; 3673; 3677; 3683; 3686; 3702; 3723; 3742; 3748; 3770; 3780; 3791.2; 3796; 3813; 3821; 3827; 3836; 3840; 3845; 3862; 3865; 3867; 3869; 3879; 3928; 3942; 3961; 3964; 4060; 4206; 4241; 4248; 4265; 4296; 4339; 4372; 4381; 4407a; 4423; 4456; 4474; 4501; 4599; 4687; 4723b; 4820; 4852; 5432; 5581; 5652b; 5846; 5941; 5942; 5959; 5964; 6023; 6061; 6094; 6101; 6126; 6148; 6152; 6156; 6164; 6201; 6221; 6235; 6259a; 6259b; 6275; 6298; 6304; 6323; 6327; 6335; 6356; 6451; 6491; 6517; 6521; 6600a; 6614; 6643; 6656; 6661b; 6759; 6819; 6841; 6889; 6899; 6913; 6979; 7003; 7007; 7009; 7014; 7112; 7117; 7280; 7379; 7459; 7576; 7607; 7630; 7869; 7982; 7987a; 8015; 8016a; 8016b; 8205; 8288; 8316; 8442; 8451; 8518; 8542; 8557; 8562; 8584; 8673; 8680; 8719; 8720; 8723; 8725; 8726; 8790; 8792; 8808; 8813; 8814; 8822; 8830; 8841; 8842; 8852; 8855; 8876; 8879; 8899; 8909; 8910; 8924; 8933; 8943; 8945; 8949; 8953/8954; 8995; 9002; 9007; 9016; 9058; 9062; 9071; 9075; 9085; 9104; 9107; 9162; 9163; 9189; 9193; 9196; 9217; 9223; 9236; 9247; 9251; 9274; 9332; 9361; 9386; 9544; 9563; 9567; 9690; 9696; 9707; 9740; 9772; 9787; 9842; 9843; 9850a; 9908; 9922; 9923; 9945; 9966; 9970; 9980; 10024; 10273; 10289; 10300; 10474a; 10474b; 10474c; 10483b; 10484b; 10494; 10885; 10914; 10941; 10944; 10964; 10973; 11056b; 11241; 11362; 11371; 11396; 11451; 11454; 11476a; 11610a; 11849; 11859; 11863; 11878; 11879; 18884; 11890; 11914; 11920; 11922; 11924; 11944; 11955; 11968; 11974; 11990b; 12022; 12025; 12027; 12041; 12046; 12048; 12053; 12073; 12121; 12123b; 12152a; 12154b; 12335; 12337a; 12345; 12436; 12442; 12464; 12467; 12470; 12485;		922; 941; 987; 2000; 2018; 2045.5; 2045.6; 2092; 2108; 2265; 2375; 2736; 2808; 3305; 3450; 3483; 3689; 3921; 4285; 4391; 5191; 5432; 5732; 5843; 6045; 6081; 6152; 6324; 6422; 6484; 6491; 8976; 9166; 9540; 10855; 11157; 12268; 12533; 12828; 15566; 15736; 15907; 16182; 17482; 17497; 17708; 17850; 17930; 18095; 18255; 18257a; 18530; 18590; 18818; 19166; 19988; 20093; 20120; 20259; 20630; 21175b; 21280; 22535; 22719; 23185; 23451; 23555; 23594; 23987; 24958

Motif Type	Chi-rho		Tau-rho
***in pace* (cont.)**	12566; 12584; 12623; 12650; 12652; 12659; 12672; 12677; 12679; 12685; 12710; 12711; 12712; 12763; 12776; 12777; 12786; 12805; 12879; 13116; 13144; 13174; 13193; 13226; 13229; 13490; 13642; 13797s; 13967; 14007; 14079; 17087; 14156; 14177; 14183a; 14209; 14332; 14372; 14411; 14412; 14414; 14501; 14504; 14544; 14546; 14601; 14613; 14694; 14778; 14796; 14864; 14887; 14889c; 14895a; 15283; 15341; 15356; 15364; 15376; 15385; 15445; 15453; 15460; 15468; 15469; 15472; 15530; 15536; 15602; 15603; 15604; 15613; 15648; 15687; 15712; 15732; 15739; 15768; 15772; 15793; 15820; 15827; 16033; 16105; 16113; 16246; 16302; 16304; 16311; 16331; 16341; 16370; 16371; 16420; 16446; 16457; 16459; 16523; 16570; 16575; 16615b; 16623; 16647; 16693; 16696; 16710c; 16723; 16752; 16903; 16967; 16972; 16999; 17001; 17002; 17010; 17012; 17089; 17116; 17120; 17124; 17129; 17153a; 17154; 17155; 17187; 17195; 17274; 17325; 17334; 17351; 17362a; 17362b; 17425; 17438; 17469; 17497; 17717; 17762; 17783; 17785; 17815; 17822; 17845; 17858; 17873; 17908; 17954; 17993; 18000; 18002; 18040; 18080; 18086; 18140; 18197; 18391; 18407; 18420; 18432; 18454; 18459; 18460; 18515; 18525; 18543; 18552; 18558; 18571; 18585; 18590; 18619; 18628; 18643; 18650; 18668; 18673; 18723; 18753; 18781; 18789; 18807; 18844; 18855; 18900; 18903; 18933; 18946; 18978; 19043; 19059; 19066; 19078; 19084; 19088; 19133; 19142; 19164; 19166; 19178; 19217; 19228; 19263; 19266; 19285; 19335; 19348; 19374; 19381; 19382; 19392; 19404; 19447; 19448; 19452; 19482; 19486; 19497; 19502; 19506; 19511; 19529; 19533; 19539; 19554; 19584b; 19608; 19678; 19684; 19699b; 19793; 19823; 19858; 19959; 19977; 19978; 19981; 20008; 20064; 20074; 20081; 20087; 20095; 20122; 20142; 20162; 20192; 20198; 20229; 20241; 20258b; 20371; 20400; 20412; 20435; 20498; 20513; 20529; 20603; 20629; 20630; 20643; 20668; 20673; 20715; 20732; 20774; 20779; 20868; 20884; 20889; 20898; 20906; 20932; 20964; 21011; 21013; 21059; 21073; 21076; 21087; 21106; 21135; 21150; 21164; 21175a; 21196; 21206; 21207; 21245; 21247; 21260; 21280; 21281; 21282; 21290; 21340; 21345; 21355; 21359; 21395; 21462a; 21471a; 21597; 21600; 21604; 21652; 21653; 21692; 21705; 21726; 21873; 21939; 22013; 22022; 22158; 22235; 22243e; 22316; 22324; 22359; 22369; 22370; 22395; 22478a; 22480; 22515; 22566; 22589; 22618; 22626; 22677; 22685; 22700; 22999; 23015; 23031; 23099b; 23119; 23131; 23132; 23154; 23159; 23168; 23203; 23219; 23232.3; 23244; 23245a; 23252; 23266; 23274; 23296; 23306; 23315; 23416; 23503; 23510; 23516; 23527; 23556; 23582; 23583; 23589; 23596; 23600; 23616; 23630; 23635; 23690b; 23695; 23794; 23916; 23972; 24022; 24101; 24234; 24357; 24359; 24492; 24543; 24958; 25032; 25071; 25223; 25314; 25359; 25373; 25600; 25607; 25621; 25823; 25911; 26988; 27049; 27263; 27642		
orans	1501; 1672; 1780; 1783; 1841; 2026; 2971; 4456; 5962; 7083c; 7722; 8410b; 9081; 9104; 12073; 12467; 14372; 15376; 16457; 18589; 20074; 21099c; 22394; 23030; 23269; 23527; 23931; 25621; 27642		9081; 9166; 18530
alpha and omega	44; 309; 397; 962; 1159; 1389; 1427; 1432; 1437; 1555; 1632; 1689; 1702; 1759; 1842; 1848.2; 1982; 2009; 2052; 2087; 2265; 2278; 2293; 2424; 2481; 2503; 2607; 2700; 2733; 2781; 2852; 2867; 2903; 2969; 2971; 3179; 3187; 3262; 3473; 3700; 3746; 3877; 3928; 3972; 4067; 4166; 4456; 4748; 4778e; 4779; 4934; 6049; 6053; 6061; 6066; 6094; 6096; 6102; 6108; 6126; 6249; 6263; 6297; 6323; 6356; 6476; 6483; 6552; 6643; 7021; 7934a; 7982; 8089b; 8189; 8322b; 8421; 8426; 8430; 8453; 8555; 8594; 8725; 8889; 9041; 9055; 9524; 9567; 9572; 9945; 9958; 9997; 10054e; 10279; 10829; 10854; 11371; 11634b; 11757; 11769; 11772; 11808; 11926; 11972; 12139b; 12258; 12319; 12324; 12356; 12405; 12464; 12529; 12627; 12652; 13107; 13109; 13127; 13169; 13197; 13499; 13644; 13661; 14039; 14204; 14254; 14429; 14497; 14504; 14536; 15353; 15356; 15410; 15502; 15764; 15768; 15772; 15858; 16246; 16271; 16967; 16972; 17473; 17476; 17497; 17544; 17873; 17911; 18030; 18040; 18150; 18571; 18590; 18656; 18844; 18989; 19006; 19108; 19166; 19177; 19374; 19403; 19462; 19506; 19523; 19787; 19875a; 19963; 19977; 19978; 20065; 20198; 20206; 20288; 20437; 20630; 20761; 21041; 21339; 21355; 21525; 21803; 22442; 22915; 22999; 23077; 23412; 23426; 23465; 23498b; 23498c; 23571; 23578; 23579; 23616; 23630; 23728g; 24958; 25071; 25805b; 25809; 26765		417; 735; 814; 1355; 1441; 2265; 2305; 2809; 3087.7; 3177; 3305; 3689; 4166; 4213; 4778a; 4890; 5191; 5219; 5919c; 6025; 6045; 6053; 6062; 6324; 6407; 6524; 8404; 8409c; 8429; 8650; 8670; 8683; 8803; 11926; 12268; 12532; 12533; 13251a; 13431; 14408; 14429; 14967r; 15454; 15679; 15778; 15848a; 15907; 15941; 16182; 17482; 17497; 17646; 17708; 17808; 17930; 18095; 18318b; 18455; 18520; 18530; 18590; 18802; 18805; 18818; 18937; 19166; 19827; 20093; 20120; 20437; 20630; 20815; 22535; 23185; 23555; 23643; 24958; 26242b
palms	1396; 1426; 1508; 1556; 1559; 1585; 1601; 1602; 1614; 1627; 1628; 1664; 1668; 1729; 1757; 1762; 1981; 2384; 2428; 2724; 2902; 3009; 3648; 3667 (= 24056); 3829; 3840; 3879; 3888 (= 24228); 4339; 4368; 5053; 6009; 6031; 6156; 6335; 6454; 8510a; 8527; 8537b; 8719; 8813; 8837; 8989; 9075; 9105; 9206; 9222; 9223; 9359; 10054e; 10830; 11808; 12053; 12593; 13176; 13908; 14501; 16999; 17167; 17187; 17729; 17762; 18459; 18628; 18753; 18978; 19099; 19166; 19176; 19177; 19288; 19374; 19711c; 19953; 20065; 21135; 21290; 22369; 22370; 22618; 22685; 22689; 23132; 23203; 23293; 23296; 23464; 23616; 23634; 24948; 25202		4890; 6025; 6369; 17511; 18805; 19166; 19812; 23185

Table C3. A list of all the chi-rhos and tau-rhos in the *CIL*

CIL Volume	Chi-rho		Tau-rho
II	2010; 3222; 4967.32; 4967.34; 4967.35; 4967.36; 4967.37; 4967.38; 4967.40a; 4967.40b; 6249.6; 6249.7; 6253.1; 6253.10; 6253.14		
II.V	334; 335; 472; 555; 572; 905; 980; 1110		337; 992d
II.VII			172; 705
II.XIV	2095; 2112; 2114; 2115; 2118; 2119; 2122; 2126; 2131; 2140a; 2145; 2148; 2151; 2154; 2165; 2198; 2206		1726; 2095; 2097; 2098; 2100; 2106; 2118; 2126; 2135; 2138; 2143; 2149; 2170; 2171; 2175; 2180; 2185; 2186; 2199; 2202; 2207; 2351
III	755; 4098; 4218; 4222; 6010.64; 8080.a.1; 8080.c.5a; 8254; 9504; 9540; 9585; 9586; 9628; 9642; 9643; 10184.49a; 19184.49b; 10233; 10235; 10237; 12012.104a; 12012.104b; 12012.104c; 13137; 13750; 14207.4; 14207.9; 14340.4; 14921		866; 2661; 2662; 2670; 3996; 6404; 6660; 7237; 8176; 9587; 9644; 10184.49c; 10238; 13169; 13351; 14306.5; 14306.1; 14315.1
V	1630; 1638; 1643; 1649; 1657; 1658; 1664; 1666; 1669; 1672; 1675; 1680; 1685; 1687; 1688; 1691; 1693; 1694; 1699; 1702; 1706; 1708; 1709; 1711; 1712; 1713; 1714; 1715; 1717; 1738; 1745; 1754; 2032; 3216; 4120; 5188; 5194; 5195; 5215; 6179; 6180; 6183; 6202; 6209; 6213; 6215; 6216; 6222; 6225; 6231; 6243; 6244; 6252; 6259; 6270; 6274; 6306; 6318; 6465; 6467; 6741; 7136; 7742; 7772; 8110.168; 8575; 8590; 8587; 8597; 8605; 8630; 8632; 8634; (unknown from Comi); 8728; 8732; 8748; 8754; 8772; 8773; 8775; 8986a		1645; 1663; 1697; 1729; 1745; 5426; 6224; 6322; 6399; 6401; 6402; 7136; 7411; 7412; 7528; 7530; 7772; 7978; 8585; 8591; 8603; 8621; 8628; 8723; 8731; 8732
VI	1420 = 31991; 1940; 2995; 8857b; 9313; 9400; 9461; 9657; 9766; 9919; 12232; 14420; 18080; 18107b; 20542; 23090; 25250 add.; 31810; 31966; 31972; 31991; 32001; 32045a; 32057a; 32944; 32949; 32969; 33865; 33866; 33895; 37280		9173; 9318; 9461; 9858; 20227; 24258; 30230; 31935/6; 31968; 31972; 32057; 32069; 33900

CIL Volume	Chi-rho		Tau-rho
VII	72a; 1221a; 1221b; 1272; 1330.27; 1350a		
VIII	55; 67; 150; 586; 748; 749; 791; 1086; 1092; 1156; 1202; 1246; 1393a; 2189; 2215; 2272; 2311a; 2447; 4763; 4792; 4824; 5156; 5265; 5664; 5665; 6700; 6960; 8427; 8429; 8637; 8640; 8641; 8643; 8649; 8707; 8709; 8730; 8757; 9714; 9715; 9717; 9789; 10306; 10478.63; 10509; 10686; 10688; 10693; 10694; 10697; 10932; 10933; 10947; 11064; 11079; 11080; 11083; 11084; 11088; 11089; 11095; 11099; 11113; 11121; 11123; 11124; 11125; 11647; 11893; 11898; 11900; 12198; 13469; 13497; 13521; 13543; 13876; 13945; 13968; 14069; 14128; 14161; 14165; 14203; 14213; 14261; 14327; 14329; 14544; 14600; 14681; 15243; 15639; 16351; 16660; 16738; 16743; 16755; 16756; 16805; 16841; 16842; 16843; 16907; 17384; 16907; 17384; 17388; 17391; 17460; 17715; 17719; 17729; 17758; 18517; 18523; 18621; 18782; 20299; 20301; 20303; 20471; 20526b; 20573; 20600; 20607; 20922; 20931; 20931a; 21496; 21550; 21552; 21555; 21752; 21767; 21816; 21817; 22551; 22552; 22555; 22556; 22561; 22573; 22576; 22577; 22578; 22643.1; 22657.2; 22841; 23012d; 23044a; 23045; 23046; 23047; 23048; 23049; 23049a; 23049b; 23049c; 23049e; 23049h; 23049k; 23053; 23053b; 23053l; 23053m; 23053o; 23053s; 23053t; 23130; 23142; 23233c; 23249l 23344; 23570; 23571; 23578; 23579; 23580; 23594; 23920; 24001; 24097; 25036; 25040; 25108; 25123; 25135; 25149; 25221; 25240; 25298; 25302; 25320; 25336; 25337; 25345; 25360; 25411; 25453; 25669; 25826a; 27920; 27921; 27922; 27929; 27930; 27952; 27982; 27991; 28045; 28047		453; 457; 464; 670; 672; 706; 707; 1105; 1138; 1247; 1390; 1434; 1769; 2219; 2220; 2492; 2519; 4353; 4354; 4671; 4762; 4799; 5492; 5669; 8190; 8650; 9590; 9591; 9866; 9869; 10516; 10636; 10665; 10689; 10713; 10714; 11085; 11095; 11119; 11134; 11649; 11653; 11895; 11897; 11901; 11903; 11904; 11905; 13468; 13529; 13756; 13806; 13836; 13931; 13927; 14226; 14326; 14746; 16244; 15419; 16485; 16488; 17385; 17387; 17389; 17390; 17609; 17747; 18668; 20410; 20412; 20909; 20920; 20928; 21424; 21431; 21540; 21773; 21774; 22642.17; 22835; 22838; 22897; 23042; 23043; 23044; 23045; 23045a; 23047a; 23049i; 23050; 23051; 23053d; 23053f; 23053g; 23053h; 23053i; 23053k; 23053n; 23562; 23563; 23564; 23565; 23568; 23572; 23575; 23576; 23581; 23585; ???; 23589; 23695; 25234; 25308; 25311; 25340a; 25813; 26393; 26395; 27690; 27767b; 27767d; 27820; 27919; 27938; 27958; 28000
IX	1378; 3136; 5566; 6078.216; 6083.88; 6090.4		933; 1363; 1367; 1370; 1377; 1390; 1393; 1396; 5566; 5900; 6402

CIL Volume	Chi-rho		Tau-rho
X	101; 663; 666; 668; 671; 673; 1191; 1342; 1373; 1540; 3309; 4488; 4489; 4493; ???; 4526; 5330; 5646; 5957; 7175; 7550; 7551; 7914; 8046.15; 8053.298a; 8053.299; 8083; 8140; 8141; 8247; 8377b		99; 668; 1350; 1526; 3313; 4494; 4504; 4524; 7178; 7972; 8045.14; 8059.501; 8080; 8082; 8140; 8174
XI	265; 323; 802; 814; 1512; 1728; 2599; 2872; 2874a; 2874b; 2886; 2897; 3054; 3756; 4057; 4068; 4075; 4079; 4165; 4344a; 4741a; 4966; 4968; 5926; 6712.513; 6715.16; 6942b; 7785; 7791; 8125		941; 1704; 1731; 4073; 4968; 6289;
XII	138; 483; 590; 942; 947; 958; 960; 965; 971; 1497; 1502; 1503; 1506; 1507; 1508; 1509; 1510; 1791; 2106; 2118; 2128; 2141; 2148; 2149; 2190; 2198; 2649; 5398; 5402; 5406; 5410; 5692.21		482; 949; 1792; 2089; 2108; 2115; 2116; 2121; 2131; 2146; 5347; 5822
XIII	299; 499; 500; 563; 565; 906; 908; 912; 921a; 921b; 921c; 1028; 1161; 1182; 1184; 1312; 1509; 1547; 1548; 1575b; 1655; 2403; 2417; 2418; 2419; 3052; 3446; 3448; 3510; 3514; 3517; 3519; 3520; 3522; 3559; 3681; 3690; 3782a; 3782c; 3782d; 3790; 3792; 3806; 3815; 3817; 3822; 3826; 3833; 3847; 3854; 3856; 3861; 3865; 3868; 3871; 3889; 3892; 3900; 3903;3905; 3907; 3908; 3957; 5594; 6258; 6259; 7601; 7602; 7603; 7604; 7639; 7642; 7645; 7646; 8331; 8447; 8486; 8487; 10019.13; 10022.111; 10024.299; 10024.930???); 10024.108c; 10024.108d; 10024.108e; 10024.400; 10025.217; 10025.220; 10026.13; 10026.54; 10026.55; 10027.69; 10035.2; 10035.21; 11032; 11035; 11036; 11208; 11332; 11917; 11920; 11921; 11922; 11929; 11963		498; 1108; 2354; 2385; 2389; 2404; 2408; 2416; 3507; 3515; 3683; 3691; 3786; 3789; 3795; 3801; 3802; 3804; 3810; 3816; 3820; 3823; 3825; 3827; 3832; 3843; 3844; 3846; 3855; 3858; 3859; 3871; 3872; 3876; 3877; 3882; 3899; 3906; 3920; 3941; 3947; 3955; 3956; 3967; 4234; 4462; 5359; 5592a; 5656; 6257; 7525; 7558; 7600; 7644; 7646; 8479/8480; 8482; 8483; 10001.267; 10024.108a; 10024.108b; 10024.266; 10026.62; 10026.65; 10026.70; 10035.22; 10036.81; 11442; 11924; 11928; 11930; 11963