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A LEAD SEAL SHOWING CONSTANTINE I WITH HIS VICTORY SIGN THE CHI-RHO AND HIS *COMES* SOL, WITH A NOTE ON ROMAN MONEY BAGS

Abstract: This study describes an important Roman double-sided imperial lead seal. The front bears the image of an emperor wearing a laureate helmet, flanked by a Chi-Rho and the legend AVG N. The bust is closely comparable to that of Constantine I on coins, and the presence of a both a Chi-Rho and Sol supports our identification of Constantine I. Two further lead seals are also presented, interpreted as showing the same emperor. The Chi-Rho first appeared in 312, and Sol disappeared from the coinage in 318 CE, indicating that the date of the seal is between 312 and 318. The helmeted bust of the emperor is most similar to coin depictions from c. 315, especially from Ticinum. The seal is of the type possibly used on money bags, and we tentatively suggest that the seal could have been produced and used during Constantine's stay in Ticinum in the autumn/winter 315 CE. The simultaneous presence of a Chi-Rho and Sol on a seal of Constantine I indicates that the Chi-Rho had not yet taken on the Christian meaning it took later. The seal also confirms the evidence from the coinage that several years after the introduction of the Chi-Rho, Constantine still favoured Sol as his *comes*. The seal is taken to indicate that the Chi-Rho was introduced as Constantine's personal victory sign, not as a strictly Christian symbol. Roman money bags are described, and the ubiquitous three protrusions seen are explained through a comparison with ancient wine skins.

Keywords: Constantine, lead seal, money bag, Sol, Chi-Rho, victory sign

In a recent study[1] one of us argued that the Chi-Rho was introduced by Constantine I as a personal victory sign, not as a religious symbol[2]. After the completion of that study, a unique lead seal bearing the image of Constantine has appeared in a sale and this seal may further support that interpretation.

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1 L. Ramskold, *A treatise on Constantine's SPES PVBLIC coins, with notes on the Chi-Rho, the staurogram, and the early bronze coinage of Constantinopolis*. Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte 69/70 (2020), 201-360.

2 This proposal has previously been forwarded by many scholars, e.g. H. A. Drake, *In Praise of Constantine. A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius' Tricennial*

A note on Roman lead seals. We use the term "seal" here to refer to the seal impression or sealing and not the actual seal-making device. Various kinds of seals and impressions in lead have been used from Hellenistic times until today, and many impressions in lead are known from Roman times. Some are related in purpose to currency as e.g. emergency currency, as tokens or as sealings for money bags. Most of those are double sided. Others are used as plombs attached to goods for likely tax or ownership declaration purposes and are one-sided, so called "hazelnut shaped". Those sealings which refer to an emperor with an inscription or show an imperial portrait are usually termed imperial seals. In Byzantine times the sealings were predominantly double-sided and in addition to imperial portraits many administrative (imperial, local, church administration) references are known. Thus, while most scholars refer to Byzantine (lead) seals, the overweight in one-sided sealings in late Roman times (especially 3rd and 4th C CE) should actually rather refer to Roman (lead) plombs. The purpose of the sealings to actually seal documents, as known from the Papal bullae and common from medieval times onwards, will have been an exception in Roman times.

In Roman imperial times, the seals reached a peak in number and quality during the period c. 290-360 CE, and especially during the reign of Constantine I[3]. Seals figuring Constantine I and his successors have been found in large numbers throughout the empire, but only a small number of these have been pub-

Orations, Berkely, CA 1976 (University of California Publications. Classical Studies 15) 72; P. Salama, *Les provinces d'Afrique et les débuts du monogramme constantinien*, Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France 1998 (publ. 2002) 137–159; K. Ehling, *Das Christogramm als magisches Siegeszeichen. Zum konstantinischen Silbermedaillon des Jahres 315*, in: K. Ehling – G. Weber (eds), Konstantin der Große. Zwischen Sol und Christus, Darmstadt / Main 2011 (Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie; Sonderbände der Antiken Welt) 27–32; K. Ehling, *Konstantin 312* [published in conjunction with the exhibition in Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung, 31 October 2012 – 30 September 2013], Munich 2012; B. Borić-Brešković – M. Vojvoda, *The Iconography of Constantine the Great's Coinage,* in: I. Popović – B. Borić-Brešković (eds), Constantine the Great and the Edict of Milan 313, The Birth of Christianity in the Roman Provinces on the Soil of Serbia, Belgrade 2013 (Narodni Muzej u Beogradu. Arheološke Monografije = National Museum Belgrade. Archaeological Monographs 22) 218– 233, see p. 228; and most recently by B. Bennett-Flammer, *Commandeering a Symbol of God: Reevaluating the Use of the Chi-Rho in Roman Britain as a Sign of Imperial Authority*. MA Thesis, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada 2020. The imperial nature of the Chi-Rho has been stressed by S. Pearce, *The Hinton St Mary mosaic: Christ or emperor?,* Britannia 39 (2008) 193–218; and B. Crerar, *Contextualising Romano-British Lead Tanks: A Study in Design, Destruction and Deposition*. Britannia 43 (2012) 135 – 166. We also note that Licinius was favourable to Christians and had the Chi-Rho at the time been a general victory sign, he would surely have used it in his fight against Maximinus, but there is no such mention in the written sources (e.g. Lactantius).

[3] R. Loscheider, *Handel und Verkehr*, in A. Demandt - J. Engemann (eds), Imperator Caesar Flavius Constantinus, Konstantin der Grosse. Austellungskatalog, Philipp von Zabern, Mainz 2007, 368-375; R. Loscheider, *Römische Bleiplomben. Plomben als Zeugnisse der spätantiken Verwaltung und Repräsentation,* in J. Engemann - A. Demandt (Hrsg.), Konstantin der Große. Ausstellung im Rheinischen Landesmuseum Trier, Philipp von Zabern, Mainz 2007, CD-ROM, Kat. Nr. I.15.70 – 72; IV.1.17.

lished. The best-known assemblage consists of the seals found in Trier[4]. Two kinds of lead seals are of interest here: the one-sided so-called hazelnut-shaped seals, and the two-sided seals often called money bag seals. During Constantinian times, the latter are much rarer than the one-sided seals. The money bag seals are coin-like in that they were struck with two dies, one for the obverse and another for the reverse. The seal described in this paper is among the most coin-like, with circular impressions on both sides, showing the bust of the emperor on one side and a typical coin motif on the other, and in having a legend on each side along the margin.

Fig. 1. Seal 1, a lead seal showing a helmeted emperor, identified here as Constantine I, with a Chi-Rho and on the other side Sol standing. Note the slit-like channel seen in the side view. Gorny & Mosch 276, lot 738. Diameter 19mm, 9.76g. Private coll.

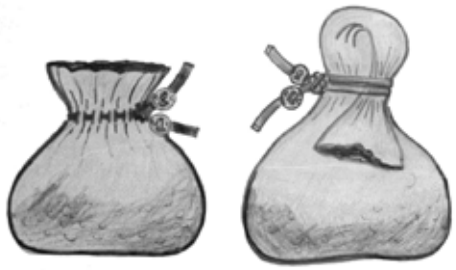

Fig. 2. Reconstructed money bags with lead seals. Adapted from Knickrehm 2021, p. 93.

Сл. 2. Реконструисана торбица за новац са оловним печатима (по: Knickrehm 2021, стр. 93)

A seal with Constantine, a Chi-Rho, and Sol

The lead seal comes from the collection assembled by Peter Weiss (Kiel), sold recently at auction[5]. Among several important seals of his collection, this one stands out

[4] A series of publications deal with material, mainly privately owned, found in Trier: H. Cüppers, *Ausgewählte römische Moselfunde*. Trierer Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst des Trierer Landes und seiner Nachbargebiete 37 (1974) 149-173; M.C.W. Still, *Roman Lead Sealings*. PhD thesis, University College of London, Institute of Archaeology 1995, 2 vols (previously published seals); H.-J. Leukel, *Römische Bleiplomben aus Trierer Funden*. Wissenschaftliche Reihe der Trierer Münzfreunde e. V., Band 3 (1995); H.-J. Leukel, *Römische Bleiplomben aus Trierer Funden 1995-2001*. Wissenschaftliche Reihe der Trierer Münzfreunde e. V., Band 4 (2002); Leukel, H.-J. *Römische Bleiplomben aus Trierer Funden (1995).* Wissenschaftliche Reihe der Trierer Münzfreunde e. V., Band 3, zweite Auflage 2015. (Trier, 2015); W. Knickrehm, *Römische Plomben aus Trier von Marc Aurel bis Constantin.* Trierer Petermännchen 20-21 (2006/2007) 73-104; W. Knickrehm, *Die Siegel der severischen Kaiser: Gold für Trier?* Trierer Petermännchen 24-25 (2010/2011) 117-138; W. Knickrehm, *Siegel, Ziegel, Vota-Münzen: Belege für die letzte Blüte Triers vor dem Untergang*. Kleine Heimatkundliche Reihe der Trierer Münzfreunde e.V., Band 15 (2021), 231 pp; Loscheider 2007 (*op. cit.).* Among the many Constantinian seals published, none is similar to Seal 1 described herein.

[5] Gorny & Mosch 276, lot 738. Peter Weiss assembled his collection from many sources, in Germany, the Balkans and elsewhere, and it is impossible to determine the provenance of the seal described herein.

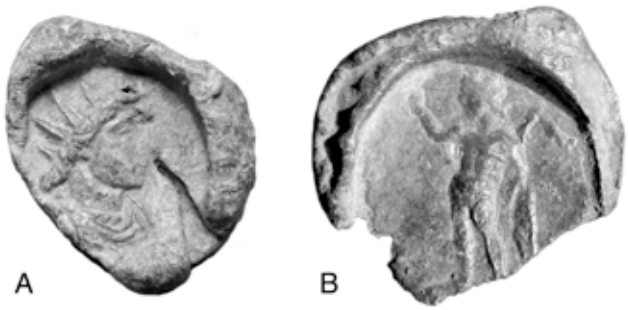

Fig. 3. Lead seals figuring Sol. A, Radiate, draped and cuirassed bust of Sol. There are detailed similarities to coins struck by Constantine I, and the seal probably dates from the early 4th C CE. 14x17mm, 4.01g, flat hazelnut shape. Private coll. B, Sol in radiate crown standing l., chlamys hanging over his l. shoulder, raising his r. hand, holding whip in his l. hand. 15x18mm, 6.08g, hazelnut shape. Private coll.

Fig. 4. Comparison of Sol on the lead seal with the reverses of bronze coins struck for Constantine I depicting Sol and similarly referring to *comes* in the legend. A, obverse of seal of Fig. 1. B, Sol raising hand and holding globe, RIC VI Ticinum 16, date 314, 3.41g, Rauch 99, lot 307. C, Sol holding globe and whip, RIC VI London 177, date 310-312, 5.14g, CNG 87, lot 1154.

Сл. 4. Поређење Сола са оловним печатом са реверсом од бронзе и представом Константина I као Сола.

because it shows the helmeted bust of an emperor, identified here as Constantine I, flanked by a Chi-Rho and paired with the figure of Sol on the other side (Fig. 1).

Description of Seal 1

Obverse: Helmeted, draped, and cuirassed bust of Constantine I r.; to l., Chi-Rho, to r., legend AVG N. There are some remnants of a laurel wreath on the helmet. The slightly curved line in front of the ear is the margin of a chin strap[6].

Reverse: Sol standing l. on baseline, wearing radiate crown, raising his r. arm in greeting gesture, l. arm extended, holding globe, chlamys hanging over shoulder and down behind l. arm. Legend COMIT-I A-VG – N.

Notes: The hole through the seal has been excavated to a depth of c. 3mm (Fig. 1, side view). As the hole is band shaped, it is likely that a leather band ran through the seal, not a string. It is therefore probable that the seal was used for the purpose of sealing a money bag (see discussion below). This is of some importance as it would likely place the production of the seal die in an imperial mint. It is noteworthy that the depiction of Sol is very similar to that seen on coins in the posture, in facing left, in the presence of a baseline. Very speculatively, one could imagine a bag with SOLI INVICTO coins being sealed with a reverse showing Sol and COMITI AVG N. A more probable interpretation is that the bag may have contained more valuable material, such as gold coins.

Knickrehm (2010) described numerous imperial seals from the Severan dynasty, found in Trier, as money bag seals. These seals are also two-sided and flat, with a slit-like channel through which a band, apparently made from leather,

6 On Constantine's coins, only visor-less helmets have a chin-strap, and many – but not all – of his visor-less helmets are shown laureate.

must have passed (Fig. 2). We agree with this interpretation. The seal discussed in this paper is two-sided and has a wide, slit-like channel and may therefore have been used to seal a money bag. Most other seals from Constantinian times are hazelnut-shaped[7] and were likely used for other commodities.

Sol. Sol is not a dominating figure on Roman lead seals. In 1995, Still analysed 2,304 Roman lead seals from throughout the empire and listed only six possible examples figuring Sol[8], and of those Sol is firmly identified in only two. For comparison, 27 seals showing Mars were listed, 13 seals with Jupiter, and 14 with Hercules. The present seal was not known to Still. In contrast Leukel, who exclusively described lead seals found in Trier, listed 19 seals with Sol standing, figuring 10 of them[9]. These seals are not well preserved, and the radiate crown can be made out in only one or two of them, so the identification of Sol rests with the globe the figure is holding. Further lead seals showing a standing Sol have also been published by Leukel (2002, fig. 65) and Loscheider[10], but these seals are anepigraphic and with no other resemblance to the present seal. We here figure two previously unpublished seals with Sol. One shows the draped and cuirassed bust of Sol turned right (Fig. 3A). The depiction is similar to a smaller one figured by Leukel[11]. The other shows Sol standing, holding his whip (Fig. 3B).

Seals with a standing Sol holding a whip are rare[12], although this attribute is seen on many coins figuring Sol (Fig. 4C). The most common attribute on both coins and lead seals is the globe (Fig. 4A-C). The standard depiction on coins was Sol standing nude, facing left, wearing the radiate crown and the chlamys hanging down behind his right shoulder, raising his right hand in a salute and in his left hand holding the globe. This depiction is also the one seen in the lead seal (Fig. 4A).

Identity of the emperor AVG N. Both sides of the seal carry the legend AVG N, *Augustus noster*[13]. Although the emperor is not named, the identity of "AVG N" can be inferred. The Chi-Rho excludes all emperors before Constantine I, and also his contemporaries. The figure of Sol on the reverse

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7 This is Type 5 of Still 1995 *(op. cit.*), p. 42, "One-sided with swelling on blank reverse".

8 Still 1995, *op. cit.,* p. 710.

9 Leukel 1995, *op. cit.*, seals 294-314, pl. 25. One may speculate that the concentration of Sol seals in Trier could reflect the fact that Constantine resided there for long periods during the time that he had Sol as his *comes*, i.e. from 310 to at least 319.

10 Loscheider 2007. *op. cit.*, CD, I.15.86, seal in Rheinisches Landesmuseum, EV 1975.35.

11 Leukel 1995 *op. cit.*, no. 314, 10x11mm, 2.91g. Leukel also figures a seal with the bust of Sol facing left, his no. 195, 10mm, 6.75g.

12 A second seal probably struck from the die of Fig. 3B is known, offered by Boersema, 17mm, weight 5.09g. Another type, known from two die-matched two-sided seals, shows Sol with whip on one side and Victory on the other, see Vossen 203 in G. Boersema – B. Dalzell, *Roman Lead Tesserae and Seals from the Tom Vossen Collection*. Hasselt, 2021.

13 Seals with the inscription AVG N, with no other legend or image, are not rare. Also seals with AVGG NN are known. Knickrehm 2007 *op. cit.* suggests that all of these date from after 348, but there is no evidence to support his date or any other.

excludes all emperors after Constantine I except perhaps Julian who, however, can be excluded on the presence of the Chi-Rho. The style of the bust is clearly western, and Licinius can thus very likely be excluded as the depicted emperor given that an AVGG NN should have been used in the case of intentionally referring to both Augusti, Licinius and Constantine. Accordingly, our conclusion is that the emperor shown on the obverse can only be Constantine I. AVG in singular indicates either a date when Constantine was in conflict with Licinius or a date after 324. The legend COMITI next to Sol indicates that the sun god is the companion, *comes*, to AVG N, our emperor, Constantine I. That is, on one side the emperor is accompanied by a Chi-Rho, and on the other by Sol.

Historical background 310-313

310 – introduction of Sol

Constantine and Sol. In particular in the last decade, a number of publications have dealt in depth with the circumstance that Constantine continued to honour Sol long after his supposed conversion to Christianity[14]. Only a few relevant aspects will be mentioned here.

Like his father, Constantine was initially allied with the Herculians[15]. Constantine was integrated into the tetrarchic coinage and there is no hint of a deviating preference of gods and companions. An example is an early aureus, from 307-308, struck in Ticinum by Maxentius for himself and Constantine showing their *comes* Hercules (Fig. 5).

For the first four years of his reign, Constantine's coins were dominated by Mars and the Genii of the Roman people and the emperors. Then, in early 310, Sol was introduced in the three mints then under Constantine's control: London, Trier, and Lyons. Constantine also, for the first time, assumed the radiate crown of Sol[16], and borrowed the title *invictus* from the sun god. From now on, the sun god dominated Constantine's coinage for around ten years, 310-319[17].

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14 To mention a few: M. Bergmann, *Der römische Sonnenkoloß, der Konstantinsbogen und die Ktistes-Statue von Konstantinopel*. Braunschweigische Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft, Jahrbuch 1997, pp. 111-129; K. Ehling – G. Weber (eds), *Konstantin der Große. Zwischen Sol und Christus*, Darmstadt / Main 2011 (Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie; Sonderbände der Antiken Welt; J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, Cambridge and New York, NY 2012. J. Wienand, *Costantino e il Sol Invictus*. In: Costantino I. Enciclopedia Costantiniana sulla figura e l'immagine dell'imperatore del cosidetto editto di Milano 313-2013. Vol. 1, pp. 177-195. Istituto della Encyclopedia Italiana. Roma 2013; M. Wallraff, *Sonnenkönig der Spätantike. Die Religionspolitik Konstantins des Großen.* eBook, Herder Verlag 2016.

15 For Herculians and Jovians, see C. H. V. Sutherland, *The Roman Imperial Coinage,* ed. by C. H. V. Sutherland & R. A. G. Carson, vol. VI: From Diocletian's reform (A. D. 294) to the death of Maximinus (A. D. 313), London 1967, p. 9; O. Hekster, *The city of Rome in late imperial ideology: The Tetrarchs, Maxentius, and Constantine.* Mediterraneo Antico II, 2 (2000) 717-748, see 718 ff; T. G. FitzGerald, *Dynasty and Collegiality. Representations of Imperial Legitimacy, AD 284-337*. Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Exeter 2017, with a genealogy on p. 327.

16 RIC VI London 156, 168, 134, 145, 198, 204; Trier 796, 802, 803, 807.

17 P. M. Bruun, *The disappearance of Sol from the coins of Constantine*. Arctos, N.S. 11 (1958) 15-37.

There are two alternative explanations as to why Constantine abandoned Hercules and took Sol as his *comes*. The first is that it could have been to disassociate himself from the revolting Maximian, and the second that it could have been the result of a vision. We shall here briefly review these two alternatives.

The first explanation says that the introduction of Sol was part of Constantine's political maneuvering. Constantine would have introduced Sol to distance himself from his father-in-law, Maximian. Constantine replaced Hercules, the patron god of Maximian, with Sol. He further proclaimed ancestry from Claudius Gothicus and identified Sol Invictus as the patron god of the latter. Pierre Bastien[18] argued that Sol could have been introduced by Constantine already in late 309 due to the break with Maximian. The latter had rebelled against Constantine in 309 but was forced to abdicate, and Maximian killed himself in early-mid 310.

The second explanation to why Constantine introduced Sol is found in the panegyric of 310[19]. It tells us of a vision that Constantine had in Gaul, after he had suppressed Maximian's rebellion in January 310, as he was marching to face a barbarian invasion on the Rhine. The panegyric was delivered later in the same year as the vision – 310 – so the date of the vision must be regarded as trustworthy. The panegyrist speaks directly to Constantine and proclaims "For you saw, I believe, O Constantine, your Apollo, accompanied by Victory, offering you laurel wreaths, each one of which carries a portent of thirty years". The message is straightforward: the sun god (in the guise of Apollo) presented Constantine with a promise of victory[20]. This explanation means that the introduction of Sol on the coinage shows that Constantine experienced the vision as a moment of profound inspiration, whether divine or not. It really makes little difference if the vision in fact was a solar halo, as concluded by Peter Weiss in 1993[21].

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18 P. Bastien, *Some comments on the coinage of the London Mint, AD 297-313*. Numismatic Chronicle 11 (1971) 151-165, see p. 160.

19 Panegyrici Latini 6.21, see C.E.V. Nixon - B.S. Rogers, I*n praise of later Roman emperors: the Panegyrici Latini: introduction, translation, and historical commentary, with the Latin text of R.A.B. Mynors*. Univ. of California Press (1994) 248-251.

20 Although Apollo and Sol were regarded as different deities by the Romans in the first C BCE (J.E. Fontenrose, *Apollo and Sol in the Latin Poets of the First Century B.C.* Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association 70 (1939) 439-455), by the time of Constantine I the two gods had more or less merged into one (L. Pérez Yarza, *Apollo as a precedent to the coinage of Sol Invictus.* Acta Ant. Hung. 58 (2018) 379–398). As Van Dam put it (R. Van Dam, *The Roman Revolution of Constantine*. Cambridge University Press 2007, p. 85), "In his guise as the Sun-god, Apollo was now the companion of Constantine."

21 Weiss (P. Weiß, *Die Vision Constantins*, in: Bleicken 1993, pp. 143–169. [Translated into English by A. R. Birley with revisions and additions by the author as "The Vision of Constantine", Journal of Roman Archaeology 16, 2003, pp. 237–259] p. 159 interprets the panegyric as saying that Constantine had the vision not inside the temple of Apollo, as has often been assumed, but before the visit. If Constantine had the vision outdoors, a solar halo presents itself as a possible interpretation. The Apollo temple in question was identified as the one at Grand (Vosges) already by Jullian (C. Jullian, *Histoire de la Gaule*. Vol. 8. Les Empereurs de Treves, II. La terre et les hommes. Paris, Hachette 1926) p. 107, n. 2.

The date of the earliest Sol coins relative to the occurrence of the vision would be crucial. If Sol can be shown to have been introduced before January-February 310, that is *before* Constantine's Apollo vision, the second explanation can be rejected. However, the date of the introduction cannot be pinpointed at present. In our view, the appearance of Sol on Constantine's coinage is most likely to be dated to early 310, with no certain types from 309 or earlier[22]. Also, the explanation that Sol was introduced to distance Constantine from the revolting Maximian cannot explain why Sol came to totally dominate Constantine's coinage for a decade, or why Constantine had his Arch in Rome decorated with numerous Sol depictions, or why – nearly 20 years the death of Maximian – Constantine erected a statue of himself as Sol/Helios/Apollo on his forum in Constantinople. Accordingly, our preferred explanation is that Sol was introduced as a consequence of Constantine's vision.

312 – victory over Maxentius

On 28 October 312 Constantine defeated Maxentius in the battle at the Milvian Bridge. Our sources Lactantius and Eusebius tell us two different stories about visions that Constantine had before the battle, in which he was given the sign by which he should conquer. In a recent study one of us (LR) discussed the two varieties of this sign – the staurogram and the Chi-Rho – at length[23], and only a few central points need to be included here. Lactantius[24], writing only a few years after the victory, described a dream or vision that Constantine had on the eve of the battle: "*Constantine was advised in a dream to mark the caeleste signum dei on the shields [of his soldiers] and thus to join battle. He did as he had been ordered and by means of a rotated letter X with its top bent over he marked Christ on their shields*." [25] Lactantius' text should be interpreted here as describing a staurogram, not a Chi-Rho[26]. Whether due to the victory sign or not, Constantine won the battle and Maxentius drowned in the Tiber.

A very different account was given by bishop Eusebius of Caesarea. His Vita Constantini, unfinished at the death of Eusebius in 339, tells us that

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22 In their comprehensive study of the coinage of London, (H.J. Cloke - L. Toone, *The London Mint of Constantius & Constantine*. Spink & Son Ltd. 2015, p. 52) Cloke and Toone conclude that Sol was introduced in the coinage from the mint of London in late 309, earlier than at any other mint, citing Bastien 1971 (*op. cit.)* and Stewartby 1993 (Lord Stewartby, *A critical London die-link of Constantine*. In: M. Price - A. Burnett - R. Bland (eds), Essays in Honour of Robert Carson and Kenneth Jenkins, pp 241-245, 1 plate. London 1993). However, no author has forwarded any explanation as to why London, being far removed from Constantine's location, should introduce not only Sol but also a new weight reduction (from 1/48 to 1/72 of a libra) several months before Lyon and Trier, mints much closer to Constantine's whereabouts in late 309-early 310. For reasons stated in the text above a date of 310 is here considered more likely.

23 Ramskold 2020 (*op. cit.),* pp. 289-321.

24 Lactantius, born c. 250 CE, was Christian and was the tutor of Constantine's eldest son Crispus.

25 Lactantius, On the Deaths of the Persecutors 44.5–6. See Barnes (T. D. Barnes, *Constantine. Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire*. Blackwell Ancient Lives, Chichester/Malden, MA 2011) p. 79 for a translation of this section.

26 Ramskold 2020 (*op. cit.)*, pp. 289-290.

Constantine had the labarum – his personal victory banner - made before or early during the campaign against Maxentius. Eusebius' narrative describes how the labarum was used during the campaign long before the final battle at the Milvian bridge: "*having set the victorious trophy [labarum], the truly salutary sign, at the head of his escorting soldiers and guards, he led them in full force ... Maxentius ... fortified every place and territory and city which was under his dominion ... But the Emperor [Constantine] overcame them all easily ... and advanced to occupy most of the land of Italy. He was now very near Rome itself*."

Eusebius also gives a detailed description of the labarum, including the Chi-Rho near its top: "*On it two letters, intimating by its first characters the name 'Christ', formed the monogram of the Saviour's title, rho being intersected in the middle by chi. These letters the emperor also used to wear upon his helmet in later times*."

The accounts of Lactantius and Eusebius differ in many respects but agree in stating that Constantine introduced a symbol which should give him victory in the war against Maxentius, and that the symbol was meant to indicate Christ. Eusebius' account is detailed but was written long after the events with the obvious intent to present Constantine as a convert to Christianity already in 312. Lactantius, however, wrote his account no later than 316[27]. Therefore Lactantius' statement that "the *caeleste signum dei"* was used to "mark Christ on their shields" is important. To Lactantius, a devout Christian and a bishop, the sign introduced by Constantine had a clear Christian meaning. To Constantine, however, it must foremost have been a victory sign, and if it did have a Christian implication for the emperor, that did not preclude him from favouring Sol.

Following the victory over Maxentius, Constantine spent three months in Rome. During this period the city mint produced vast numbers of coins. Some of these proclaimed that Constantine had liberated the city (LIBERATORI VRBIS SVAE) and restored it (RESTITVTOR VRBIS SVAE). The majority of the coins were, however, honouring the unconquerable Sol. A much smaller number honoured Mars the protector, and a very small number honoured the victorious Hercules. On the latter coins, Hercules is not shown performing any of his labours, as was otherwise commonly the case, but is portrayed as a victor, holding Victory who is presenting a wreath, and the legend is HERCVLI VICTORI (Fig. 6). These coins show that Constantine was not yet quite ready to completely abandon Hercules when referring to the victorious qualities. The vast majority of coin types and donatives produced after the victory over Maxentius are, however, dominated by Sol. The only reasonable conclusion is that Constantine gave the main credit for his victory to Sol[28].

An emission of gold solidi was also produced in Rome after the victory, in the names of the three emperors Constantine, Licinius and Maximinus. There is a general proclamation of victory, VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG,

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[27] Barnes (T. D. Barnes, *Lactantius and Constantine*. Journal of Roman Studies 63 (1973) 29-46.) p. 38. Since there is no mention by Lactantius of a conflict between Constantine and Licinius, he must have written "On the Deaths of the Persecutors" before the confrontation of Constantin and Licinius in 316.

[28] We can only infer what message Constantine wanted to send to the Roman people. What he thought himself we will never know.

Fig. 5. Aureus from 307-08 showing Hercules as the *comes* of Constantine I. The reverse legend HERCVLI COMITI AVGG NN, 'Hercules is the companion of the Augusti,' refers to Maxentius, Maximian, and Constantine. RIC VI Ticinum no. 90. Milan.

Fig. 6. Follis of Constantine I struck in Rome very soon after the victory over Maxentius in October 312. RIC VI Rome 300, officina P. Vienna KHM, RƠ 73033, 4.85g, 23mm.

Сл. 6. Фолис Константина I после победе Максенција у октобру 312. RIC VI Rome 300, officina P. Vienna KHM, RÖ 73033, 4.85g, 23mm.

but the solidi give no hint at any change in Constantine's relation to the traditional gods and values; the legends are GLORIA EXERCITI AVGG NN, IOVI CONSERVATORI AVGG, MARTI CONSERVATORI, PRINCIPI IVVENTVTIS, and VBIQVE VICTORES[29].

313 – Milan and Ticinum

In late January 313 Constantine moved from Rome to Milan, to oversee the marriage of his half-sister Constantia to Licinius, and where he also together with Licinius promulgated the so-called Edict of tolerance. He probably left Milan in March, for Trier.

During Constantine's 2-month stay in Milan, its mint, which was located at nearby Ticinum, produced a series of gold multiples and solidi[30]. The obverse of a large gold medallion shows the jugate busts of Constantine and Sol surrounded by the legend INVICTVS CONSTANTINVS MAX AVG (Fig. 7A). The emperor has here borrowed the epithet of Sol, INVICTVS[31]. Constantine's shield shows Sol in his quadriga, flanked by the Sun and the Moon, with Terra

[29] The lack of any indication in the coinage of a change in Constantine's religious preferences is conspicuous. Bruun stated 1958 (*op. cit.*), p. 36: "the religious policy of Constantine, at least as mirrored in the bronze coinage of Treveri, appears unaltered during the ten years from A.D. 308 to 318." Emending the period to 310-319, the same can be said of every mint under Constantine's control.

[30] RIC VII Ticinum 111-114.

[31] Constantine's medallion is a near copy of a multiple of Probus, also showing the jugate busts of Sol and the emperor, and where also Probus uses INVICT in the legend, see Bergmann 2006, Fig. 1 (M. Bergmann, *Konstantin und der Sonnengott. Die Aussagung der Bildzeugnisse.* In: A. Demandt - J. Engemann (eds), Konstantin der Grosse. Geschichte – Archäologie – Rezeption, pp. 143-161. Kolloquiumsband Internationales Kolloquium vom 10.-15. Oktober 2005 an der Universität Trier zur Landesausstellung Rheinland-Pfalz 2007 "Konstantin der Grosse". Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier 2006.).

and Oceanus below (Fig. 7B). The symbolism is clear: Sol is the supreme God, with power over everything on Earth and in the skies. Solidi issued at the same time also show Sol in his quadriga, here accompanied by Victory (Fig. 7C). The legend is SOLI INVICTO AETERNO AVG (to the unconquered Sun and eternal Augustus).

These gold emissions were produced only three months after the battle of the Milvian bridge. Whatever thoughts Constantine himself had about whom to credit the victory, it is clear that his official version was that it was won with the help of Sol.

While the mint of Ticinum produced the gold emissions with Sol, stone masons in North Africa were producing milestones along the roads paid for by Constantine as part of his good-will campaign there. These milestones carry the personal victory sign of Constantine, the Chi-Rho[32]. Two of the milestones can be securely dated to between 28 Oct 312 and 30 April 313. They constitute the earliest datable occurrences of Constantine's victory sign. For reasons unknown to us, the sign was used very sparingly after its inception in late 312. Between 313 and 319, when the symbol was used on bronze coins from

Fig. 7. Gold donatives honouring Sol struck in Ticinum in January-March 313. A, B, RIC VI 111, medallion, 40mm, 39.78g. Paris BNF. C, RIC VI 113, solidus, 18mm, 4.57g. London BM 1896,0608.97, copyright the Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 8. Seal 2, a lead seal showing Constantine, draped and cuirassed, with a laureate helmet. In front of the bust is the legend AVG N, and behind the bust is a prominent Chi-Rho. The reverse of the seal displays a reticulate imprinted pattern showing that the seal was stamped against a woven fabric, presumably the cloth of a sack. 14x18mm, 4.29g. Private Coll.

Сл. 8. печат 2, оловни печат са представом Константина и легендом AVG N и иза мотивом Хи- Ро. 14x18mm, 4.29g, приватна колекција.

[32] Salama 1998 (*op. cit.*), Ramskold 2020 (*op. cit.*), Lenski 2016 (N. Lenski, *Constantine and the Cities. Imperial Authority and Civic Politics*. Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA 2016). Salama and Ramskold see the Chi-Rho on the milestones as Constantine's victory sign, while Lenski (*op. cit.*, p. 71) sees it as a religious symbol. As a victory sign, the Chi-Rho would proclaim the victory of the new ruler, Constantine, over Maxentius. It is, of course, possible that the Chi-Rhos on these milestones were added later. However, we agree with Salama that it is more likely that the Chi-Rhos are contemporary with the inscriptions; see discussion by Ramskold 2020 (*op. cit.*), p. 303.

Siscia[33], there is only one possible confirmed occurrence on any medium, on the so called Ticinum medallion. This silver medallion has for a long time been dated to 316, but recently Lenski forwarded indications that it could be from as late as 321[34].

The lead seal described here (Seal 1), which can only date from 312-319, may therefore be the earliest securely dated evidence of Constantine's Chi-Rho besides the Algerian milestones. Importantly, the presence of Sol in combination with the Chi-Rho shows that at this time, the Chi-Rho will not have symbolized Christ, or at least not in a form demanding the exclusion of other gods.

No other seals combining a Chi-Rho and Sol are known, but there is a one-sided seal, called Seal 2 herein, very similar to the obverse of the Seal 1. Like this, it shows the helmeted bust of Constantine with a Chi-Rho behind and the legend AVG N in front (Fig. 8). Constantine is not named on the seal but the portrait shows the hooked nose and typical appearance of Constantine and the identification is unambiguous. The posterior termination of the wreath is clear, proving that the helmet is laureate. The absence of an impression on the back of the seal precludes a more precise comparison, but the obverse layout and style is similar. It is quite possible that the two seals are roughly contemporary, and the dies may even come from the same workshop.

Recently, a further lead seal, called Seal 3 herein, depicting Constantine I, and with bearings for the present study, appeared on the commercial market (Fig. 9). The seal is one-sided, showing Constantine with cuirassed bust and wearing a laureate helmet with a chin-strap. To the left is the legend CON and to the right a C followed by two incompletely preserved letters. The reverse shows the reticulate pattern of a woven fabric, an imprint created when the seal was stamped against the bag it was sealing. A roughly circular hole runs sideways through the seal, preserving the shape of the string which passed through it. This seal is discussed further under **Date and place of production** below.

Date and place of production

Date. A general date for the seal can be firmly established. As detailed above, the written sources state that the Chi-Rho was introduced by Constantine prior to the battle against Maxentius 28 October 312, and the scant evidence there is supports this date. After a comprehensive study of all available evidence, Ramskold[35] concluded that the earliest known representations of the Chi-Rho are found on the milestones in Algeria mentioned above, securely dated to between 28 October 312 and 30 April 313. The sun god on the reverse

33 RIC VII Siscia 61; see Ramskold 2020 (*op. cit.*) fig. 53. Most authors today regard the inclusion of a Chi-Rho in the helmet design in two dies out of many dozen as a local decision by the mint or by an individual engraver, and not as indicating that Constantine was personally involved in the design.

34 N. Lenski, *The Date of the Ticinum Medallion*. Numismatica e Antichità Classiche – Quaderni Ticinesi 47 (2018) 251–295.

35 Ramskold 2020 (*op. cit.*); see also Lenski 2016 (*op. cit.*).

of the seal disappeared from coinage in 318 or possibly 319, with only an occasional appearance later[36]. It is therefore possible that Seal 1 can be dated to sometime between late 312 and 319.

An attempt is made here to provide an even narrower date for this seal by comparing it to the emissions (donatives and coinage) of the Roman mints under Constantine.

Different laureate helmets

One feature which may constrain the possible time span for the date of the seal is the type of helmet, and the fact that it carries a laurel wreath. Laureate helmets were regularly used on coinage by the tetrarchs in the early 4th C, and when Constantine became Caesar, he was also occasionally figured wearing a laureate helmet. Aquileia and Ostia, mints controlled by Maxentius, struck types with Constantine Caesar in a laureate helmet in 306-307[37]. From then until 314/315 laureate helmets were absent from all mints with one exception, London. Between 306 and 314 the mint of London regularly showed Constantine in a laureate helmet[38]. The 306-314 London mint helmets are easily recognizable, being of Athenian type (Fig. 10A). This kind of helmet, discontinued in 314/315, was strongly decorated, had a long, protruding frontal brim (nasal guard), it covered the ear, lacked cheek pieces and therefore had no chin strap (Fig. 10A, B)[39]. Apart from London, only Lyon produced a few very rare types with an Athenian helmet[40], in 314-315 (Fig. 10B). However, all three lead

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36 One of the highly aberrant Antioch gold emissions, dated by Bruun 1966 to 324 CE (P. M. Bruun, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, ed. by C. H. V. Sutherland – R. A. G. Carson, vol. VII: Constantine and Licinius, A.D. 313–337, London 1966), from after the takeover by Constantine, includes a solidus (RIC VII Antioch 49) with the legend SOLI COMITI AVG N. There are also numerous post-320 CE gold multiples showing Constantine wearing the radiate crown, the RIC VII numbers and dates for these are: Antioch 37, 38corr. (324), 70 (326); Nicomedia 53 (324), 68, 69 (324-325); Siscia 26 (317); Sirmium 18 (321). Even though several of the dates given in RIC VII must be doubted, it is clear that these 1.5 and 2 solidi multiples were struck many times in many mints during a decade, 317-326, showing Constantine in the solar crown.

37 See Drost (V. Drost, *Le monnayage de Maxence (306–312 après J.-C.*). Zurich 2013 (Schweizer Studien zur Numismatik = Études Suisses de Numismatique 3): Aquileia 96b/1 (26 July 306 - spring 307), 122c-d, 126b-c, (May/June 307), Ostia 31a, 41/1; Paolucci - Zub (R. Paolucci - A. Zub, *La Monetazione di Aquileia Romana, The Roman Imperial Coinage of Aquileia*. Raffaele Paolucci Editore, Padova 2000), nos 214, 217, 222, 223, 229, all from Aquileia.

38 Cloke - Toone 2015 (*op. cit.*), 4.04.010 (26 July 306-spring 307), 5.02.13 (late 309-311), 7.01.005 and onward (311-312, many types).

39 No helmets were figured on the London coins between 314 and the introduction of the VLPP coinage in 319. The Athenian helmet ceased appearing in 313/314, and after a gap of five years, London began striking the VLPP type with a bowl-shaped helmet similar to that used in the other mints.

40 In the T F/PLG emission from Lyon there are two obverse types with an Athenian helmet; see http://www.notinric.lechstepniewski.info/7lyo-22.html and http://www.notinric.lechstepniewski.info/7lyo-25.html.

Fig. 9. Seal 3, a lead seal showing Constantine in laureate helmet and cuirassed bust. To the left, CON, to the right C and two illegible letters. The reverse shows an imprint of the reticulate pattern of the woven cloth of the bag on which the seal was stamped. 2.82g, 15.9 x 13.0mm. Private coll.

Fig. 10. Athenian type helmets from London and Lyons. A, follis of Constantine I from London, struck 310-312. The helmet is typical for London until 314 CE. RIC VI 228. CNG 85, lot 1205, 3.82g. B, Lyons not in RIC, from the T F/PLG emission from 314-315 (date based on COS IIII legends for Constantine I). 3.60 g, 19 mm. Private collection.

Fig. 11. Constantine I wearing the laureate brim-less helmet with cheek-pieces on gold emissions from Ticinum, all probably from October-December of 315. Not to scale. A, 2-solidi multiple RIC VI Ticinum 25, VLPP reverse, London BM, copyright the Trustees of the British Museum. B, RIC VII Ticinum 58, obverse shown mirrored to facilitate comparison. Schulman 139 (1923), lot 2654, now in Dumbarton Oaks. C, solidus with VLPP reverse, not in RIC, ANS 1980.109.183.

seals of Constantine under discussion here (Seal 1-3) show a different type of helmet, one introduced in coinage in 315 CE. Comparisons will therefore be made with this type of helmet.

Soon after the discontinuation of the Athenian helmet[41], a new type was introduced. The new helmet was bowl-shaped, lacked a frontal protrusion, had

[41] The Athenian helmet appears again after 318 in emissions from several mints.

a bay in the side margin to accommodate the ear, and possessed cheek pieces with a chin strap. This new helmet type seems to have been introduced in Rome for Constantine's vicennalia during Constantin's stay there in 315[42]. It is found in a VLPP[43] solidus emission (Fig. 12K), struck for Constantine and Licinius. This emission was not included in RIC VII by Bruun because he dated it to before 313[44].

Fig. 12. Comparison of the bust of Constantine I in the three leads described herein with typical VLPP from various mints. A, Seal 1, B, Seal 2, C, Seal 3, D, London RIC 154, TimeLine Auctions, 7 days sale of antiquities and coins, 10 September 2018, 2.98g; E, Trier RIC 209, Roma Numismatics E-sale 72, lot 1540, 3.72g; F-H, Ticinum: F, RIC 82, Savoca Blue 5, lot 1491, 2.57g; G, RIC 87, Naville 33, lot 528, 2.61g; H, RIC 82, eBay ID dionysos-numismatik, August 2018, 3.29g; I, Arles RIC 191, Roma Numismatics E-sale 72, lot 1545, 3.60g; J, Lyon, not in RIC, emission TF */PLG, Chitry Hoard no. 2077, CGB Live Auction June 2017, brm_432285, 3.08g; K, Rome, VLPP solidus not in RIC, CNG 67, lot 1771, 4.41g; L, Siscia RIC 59, Forum Ancient Coins, 3.06g.

From Rome, Constantine travelled to Milan in October 315. Milan did not have a mint but nearby Ticinum produced coins and donatives. Here the new helmet type appears in two gold emissions that seem to be dateable to 315. The first is RIC 7 Ticinum no. 25 (Fig. 11A), a 2-solidi multiple with a VLPP reverse and the reverse legend ending in AVGG NN. The shield is inscribed VOT/X and the altar MVL/XX, apparently referring to Constantine's decennalia in 315-316. There are also solidi from Ticinum (Fig. 11C), unknown to

42 In a series of publications (see references in Ramskold 2020 *op. cit.*), Ramskold has presented evidence that during much of Constantine's reign, gold was struck only at the location of the court. Constantine did not visit Rome between 315 and 328/329, so unless an exception was made for some special reason unknown to us, the VLPP emission from Rome must date from the summer of 315. A detailed discussion of the VLPP from Rome will be published in "The gold and silver emissions of Rome under Constantine I from 313 to 337 CE" (Ramskold MS).

43 Short for VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC[ipis] PERP[etvi].

44 Bruun 1966 (*op. cit.*) p. 281 stated that "the VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC PERP/ VOT X coins [of Rome] were created for the *quinquennalia*, 31 March 311/312". He based this date on his then opinion that the Battle of the Milvian bridge took place in October 311, not 312. Bruun's date of 311 has long been discredited, and the consensus is 312. Accordingly, Bruun's date for the VLPP of Rome also falls.

Bruun so unlisted in RIC VII, of VLPP type but with the shield inscribed VOT/P R. The dating of these types is problematic due to the existence of a very similar 4 ½ solidi VLPP multiple from Thessalonica (RIC VII no. 7) which also has the shield inscribed VOT/X and the altar MVL/XX, but with AVG N in the singular on the obverse. Bruun discussed this multiple at length (1966 pp. 482 ff.) and dated it to 317[45]. Finally, there is another solidus from Ticinum showing Constantine in the new helmet, dated by Bruun to 2nd half of 316 (Fig. 11B).

Hoard data show that very few London coins circulated far outside the British province[46], so the laureate Athenian helmet type common in London coins would be largely unknown in the rest of the empire. Further, very few persons would actually see the gold solidi and multiples produced in Rome showing the emperor in a laureate helmet, and the general public would not know how the emperor was portrayed on these valuable donatives.

However, the staff levying tax on goods passing their toll stations must have been familiar with the new image on the lead seal described here, either through having seen gold struck with that bust type or through other means. After all, the whole point of having the emperor's bust on the lead seal was to show that it sealed an official shipment for imperial use, and accordingly the staff should recognize it as e.g. signaling an exemption from tax[47]. Therefore, the Chi-Rho/Sol lead seal is likely to post-date the VLPP gold emissions. We thus suggest a date of the lead seal no earlier than 315. On the other hand, Sol disappears in or just after 318, so the date of the seal is perhaps unlikely to be later than 318. Although the evidence is scant and ambiguous, it appears that the laureate, brim-less helmet could indicate a 315-318 date for the lead seal.

Place of production. The lead seal is clearly of an imperial character, and thus connected to imperial use such as tax-related purposes or money bags of the imperial mints. Large numbers of shipments of goods and money and letters were continuously moving though the empire, and transports to and from the imperial court must have made up a significant part of those. It is reasonable to assume that the dies for striking imperial lead seals were produced at the imperial mints[48]. Imperial seals could surely be produced and used without the em-

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45 In order to arrive at the 317 date, Bruun had to acknowledge that "The result was a clearly anachronistic multiple of Thessalonica." In other words, the date is most uncertain.

46 The percentage of circulating London coins decreased with increasing distance from Britain and very few London coins reached the Balkans and further east: Bikic-Do, Serbia: 0.45% of 10,590 coins (C. Brenot, *Le Trésor de Bikić-Do (environs de Šid, Voïvodine)*, in N. Duval - V. Popović (eds), Sirmium. viii, Études de numismatique danubienne, trésors, lingots, imitations, monnaies de fouilles, ive au xiie siècle, (Collection de l'École française de Rome, 29 – Recherches archéologiques franco-yougoslaves à Sirmium 2), Rome 1978, pp. 5-98.); Nagytétény, Hungary: 0.33% of 10,585 coins (A. Alföldi, *Il Tesoro di Nagytétény*. Rivista Italiana di Numismatica 1921, pp. 113 – 190).

47 Still 1995 (*op. cit.*) p. 67: "All imperial sealings would have guaranteed the physical integrity of the contents and would have acted as proof of exemption from customs duties at any collection points which they may have passed."

48 Neither Still 1995 (*op. cit.*) nor Leukel 1995 (*op. cit.*) discussed the possible places of production of the imperial seal dies. Loscheider 2007 (*op. cit.*) p. 373 mentioned that some seals may have been produced at the imperial mint, and the same idea was forwarded by Knickrehm 2007 (*op. cit.*) p. 83. Popovic (I. Popovic, *Lead seals with tetrarchic busts from*

peror's presence, but the need for such seals must have increased substantially when the emperor was in residence. However, during the period of interest here, 313-319, Constantine's residence shifted repeatedly. From Rome he moved to Milan, then Arles, Trier, Lyon, Trier, Rome, Milan, Serdica, Thessalonika, Serdica, Sirmium, Siscia, Thessalonika, Aquileia, and finally Ticinum. Any of these places could have produced the seal.

It is regrettable that no detailed study of Roman imperial lead seals has yet been published. Seals of the Constantinian dynasty are the most common of the imperial seals, with earlier and later emperors being represented by fewer seals[49]. A survey of Constantinian seals known to the present writers indicates that relatively few dies were used, and that a very large number of seals must have been produced by each die[50]. We have die matched the Constantinian imperial seals known to us. The die identification was done using the same comparative method as that used for coins[51], and the die identified links are as well supported as in bronze coins. In our material, seven dies name Constantine I, and they are known from 1, 1, 1, 2, 2, 3, and 10 seals. For Constantius II as Augustus, our material includes four dies naming this emperor, known from 1, 2, 4, and 7 seals. For seals where the emperor is not named but can be identified on iconography the situation is similar. The material is small, but the high number of die matches clearly indicates that only a small number of imperial dies were used[52]. This, in turn, seems to indicate that the imperial seals were produced only at a small number of locations. We regard it as likely that these locations were places of residence for the emperor or the court.

Comparisons. The large-scale introduction of the laureate brim-less helmet came with the VLPP coinage. This was introduced immediately after the termination of the SOLI coinage, that is, in 318-319[53].

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the imperial palace in Sirmium. СТАРИНАР LXIX (Starinar 69), 2019, pp. 273-285) p. 279 mentioned that "The possibility that dies for the production of lead seals may have been produced in the Treveri mint is suggested by seals with scenes resembling those on the coins of Constantine II minted at that mint." We also note that the imperial seal boxes, especially those of the Flavian emperors, show portraits very similar to those on coins, which may indicate that the seal boxes, or at least the dies for the lids, were produced at the imperial mint/s.

49 This is the impression one gets from both museum collections, the commercial market, and excavation reports.

50 This is natural because lead is soft, and the dies would hardly become worn or break during use.

51 In every die, there are individual details that characterize that particular die. Most lead seals are encrusted and incomplete and more difficult to compare than coins, but the numbers given here are not particularly uncertain. Only a small number of Constantinian imperial seals lack clear diagnostic features due to insufficient preservation.

52 An alternative is that a small number of hubs were used to produce a large number of dies. All dies produced from each hub would be so similar that the seals – especially today – would be virtually indistinguishable. The question of whether or not hubs were used in late Roman imperial mints is not settled and is outside the scope of the present discussion.

53 Bruun 1966 (*op. cit.*) gave the dates for the various mints and emissions (all are VLPP except where noted): London 319, Lugdunum 319/320, Trier 318/319, Arelate 319, Rome 318-319 (the PR /RP emission), Siscia 318, Thessalonica 318-319 (VOT/XX/MVLT/XXX). Bust D6 is unlisted in RIC VII for the VLPP from Lyon but the type exists (Fig. 11J

Comparing the bust of Constantine in the lead seal with that in the coinage yields parallels in several western mints (Fig. 12) but no eastern. Although similarities and differences are difficult to quantify and evaluate, the visual impression is that the styles of Thessalonica and Siscia differ the most from the seal, and Ticinum the least, with the other mints in between. The conclusion here is that there is some possibility that the seal was produced in Ticinum, but that the mints of London, Arles, Trier and Rome cannot be ruled out. One may note that the new Seal 3 shows features characteristic of VLPP busts from Ticinum: the absence of pterygia, the short, horizontal wreath ties, and the crest which narrows towards the back (compare Fig. 12C with 12F-H). We regard it as quite possible that this seal was produced at Ticinum. One may speculate that it was produced during Constantine's stay there in late 315, or possibly during the stay in 319. Finally, there is a possibility that the seal was not produced at an imperial mint at all, although we regard that as less likely.

Constantine and Sol

The pendulum has swung from the view - first propagated by Eusebius and then the accepted doctrine for nearly 1700 years – that Constantine was an ardent Christian from no later than 312 to the commonly held view today that the emperor never abandoned Sol but incorporated Christ and Christian beliefs in a personal mix which even extended to Constantine portraying himself as both Sol[54] (or Helios) and the new Christ[55]. We agree with Bardill[56] who writes that "I can conclude only that he believed that the Unconquered Sun was compatible with the Christian God".

Physical evidence of Constantine portrayed as Sol is seen in a bronze statuette now in Copenhagen believed to portray Constantine with twelve rays emanating from his head (Fig. 13A). Another bronze bust, in Cologne, is also believed to show Constantine with twelve solar rays radiating from his head (Fig. 13B). A life size statue head found in Trier shows Constantine wearing the radiate crown[57]. An equestrian bronze statue from Termessos in Pisidia, securely dated to after Constantine's victory over Licinius in 324 was dedicated to the emperor Constantine in the guise of the local god Helios Pantepoptes (the "All-Seeing Sun"). A large radiate marble head from Gythium in the Peloponnese probably figures Constantine[58].

herein) and the helmet is of the standard type.

54 See Bardill 2012 (*op. cit.*), pp. 28-37.

55 Bardill 2012 (*op. cit.*). This idea is demonstrated by Constantine's design of his mausoleum, the Church of the Apostles in Constantinople, in which Constantine's sarcophagus was set in the center of a circle of twelve stelae symbolizing the twelve apostles of Christ; Eusebius 4.60.3. *([Eusebius Caesariensis], Life of Constantine [Vita Constantini, VC]. Introduction, Translation, and Commentary by A. Cameron and St. G. Hall*, Clarendon Ancient History Series, Oxford 1999).

56 Bardill 2012 (*op. cit.*) p. 326.

57 *http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk*, LSA-2407. Faust (S. Faust, *Ein "neues" Konstantinporträt im Rheinischen Landesmuseum Trier*. Trierer Zeitschrift 54 (1991), 233-237, figs. 2-5 and 7.)

58 G. Deligiannakis, *Helios and the Emperor in the Late Antique Peloponnese*. Jour-

But the most important and striking example is the over life-size statue of himself which Constantine erected on top of the porphyry column on his forum in Constantinople, probably in 328, well before the inauguration of the city 11 May 330. It shows the emperor as Sol, with a radiate crown and holding the globe. The statue fell down in 1106, but it is depicted on the Tabula Peutingeriana (Fig. 14A) and is described in ancient sources[59]. A modern reconstruction is figured here (Fig. 14B).

Originally there must have been an inscription with a dedication on the base of the column. Several inscriptions given by Byzantine writers have been rejected and regarded as fictitious by modern scholars. However, a text recorded by Leo Grammaticus in the early 11th century might represent the original dedicatory inscription[60]: "To Constantine, who shines equal to the sun."[61]

Several ancient sources mention the rays crowning Constantine's head, and Malalas specifically states that they were seven in number. Bardill[62] (2012) in essence devoted a book chapter of close to 100 pages to a thorough analysis of the rays on the statue and their meaning. Many scholars today express views like "by raising a statue of himself as a sun god high above the cityscape, Constantine thereby set the foundation for his imperial cult and directly associated himself with Helios/Apollo."[63] Bardill, however, points out that in contrast to Constantine's statue, Sol/Helios is portrayed with a chlamys or chiton but never with a spear. The statue was thus not showing Constantine as Sol/Helios/Apollo, but as the emperor himself wearing attributes of the sun god. As with so much in his life, Constantine left space for some ambiguity, leaving to the viewer to see one of several possible interpretations.

Besides the coinage and statuary there is a well-dated and well-preserved monument – the Arch of Constantine – showing that Constantine's commitment to Sol continued after the victory over Maxentius. To honour the victor, the city of Rome decided to erect a triumphal arch. The arch was dedicated in connection with Constantine's decennalia in July 315, and Constantine himself was present. As first published by Panella in 1990[64], elaborated by Bergman in

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nal of Late Antiquity 10, nr 2 (2017), pp. 325-50.

59 Several ancient authors – i.a. Hesychios, Malalas, Zonaras, Anna Comemna - described the statue in some detail although they do not say if Constantine was portrayed nude or clothed. Both Bassett (S. Bassett, *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2004) and Bardill 2012 (*op. cit.*) argue that Constantine was portrayed nude, as is also the statue in the Tabula Peuteringeriana.

60 This was argued by Bauer (F.A. Bauer, *Stadt, Platz und Denkmal in der Spätantike. Untersuchungen zur Ausstattung des öffentlichen Raums in den spätantiken Städten Rom, Konstantinopel und Ephesos*. Mainz 1996), p. 177.

61 Κωνσταντίνῳ λάμποντι ἡλίου δίκην.

62 Bardill 2012 (*op. cit.*), pp. 28-125.

63 C.T. Wells, *The Column of Constantine at Constantinople: A Cultural History (330-1453 C.E.)*. MA thesis, Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies, The City University of New York 2017, p. 32.

64 C. Panella, *La valle del Colosseo nell'Antichità,* in Bollettino di Archeologia 1-2 (1990), pp. 34-88.

Fig. 13. Bronze statuettes showing Constantine as Sol. A, head of standing figure, height of illustrated part 18.2 cm (full height 49,7 cm), Copenhagen, inv. 8040. B, bronze bust probably of Constantin I, height 8,7 cm, Köln, inv. RGM 99,523.

Сл. 13. Бронзане статуете које представљају Константина као Сола.

Fig. 14. A, Detail of the Tabula Peutingeriana showing the Tyche of Constantinopolis seated next to Constantine's column. Adapted from Bosio 1983, fig. 22. B, Reconstruction of the imperial statue on the porphyry column in Constantine's Forum at Constantinople, produced by A. Tayfun Öner for Bardill (2012). © A. Tayfun Öner, used with permission.

1997[65], and convincingly illustrated by Marlowe in 2004[66], both the position, orientation, and decoration of the Arch celebrates the sun god[67]. In contrast to what one might expect from the accounts given by Lactantius and Eusebius, a Chi-Rho or staurogram is nowhere to be seen, but Constantine's soldiers are carrying statuettes of Sol, both in the frieze (Fig. 15) and in a column-base relief[68]. On the east face is a huge tondo depicting Sol with his quadriga. On

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65 Bergmann 1997 *op. cit.*

66 E. Marlowe, *Framing the Sun: The Arch of Constantine and the Roman cityscape*. Art Bulletin June 2006, Vol. 88, no. 2, 223-242.

67 E. Marlowe, *"That Customary Magnificence which is Your Due": Constantine and the Symbolic Capital of Rome.* Ph. D. thesis, Columbia Univ. 2004. Ian Ferris wrote (I. Ferris, *The Arch of Constantine. Inspired by the Divine.* Amberley 2013), p. 48: "Thus it would appear that the artworks on the Arch of Constantine illustrating the emperor's devotion to the sun-god were echoed and intensified by the proximity of the nearby colossal statue of Sol, which was also framed by the arch's central opening and thus in some way integrated into its visual narrative." Which deity who granted Constantine his victory is not stated in the inscriptions. The only epigraphic hint on the Arch is the cryptic reference to an "instinctu divinitatis" which could mean Sol or any divinity.

68 Bardill 2012 *op. cit.* p. 101, fig. 85; Bergmann 2006 *op. cit.*, fig. 5.

Fig. 15. The first panel in the Frieze of Constantine, on the west side of the arch, showing the departure from Milan. Detail showing Constantine's soldiers carrying statuettes of Sol. Photo by L.R.

Сл. 15. Први панел Константиновог фриза, на западној страни славолука који приказује полазак из Миана. Детаљ са Константиновим војницима који носе статуете Сола. Фото: Ларс Рамсколд

Fig. 16. Wineskins figured in Greek pottery. A, tondo from a red-figure kylix showing a youth carrying a wineskin. Eueurgides painter, Corinth, 515-500 BCE. Athens. B, A satyr carrying a wineskin. Note the strings closing the openings. Vulci, 520 -500 BCE. München, inv. 2603. Wikimedia Commons.

the east side of the east passage is a relief of Sol wearing his chlamys and radiate crown and on the other side is a relief of Constantine raising his arm in the gesture of Sol[69].

The arch displays no labarum, no Chi-Rho or staurogram. There is a complete absence of any reference to a shift in Constantine's religious preference. Constantine's soldiers, on their way to defeat Maxentius, do not have shields with a Chi-Rho or staurogram, but the insignia they carry are foremost Sol but also Victory and the eagle.

Meaning of the Chi-Rho symbol. A Chi-Rho can be found on any kind of historical object, such as an inscription, a fresco, a piece of pottery, an amulet, a lead seal, or a coin. To many archaeologists and historians, the Chi-Rho is an exclusively Christian sign. Accordingly, the sign indicates that the historical person/s associated with the object were Christians. This dogmatic view was challenged by Still (1995), who stated that "On the subject of the Chi-Rho, it would seem that in the majority of cases in which this definitely appears on sealings it is being used as an official symbol for the fourth or fifth century government, and not as a simple declaration of faith." In particular the earliest occurrences of the Chi-Rho seem to be of a non-religious character, such as the Chi-Rhos on the Algerian milestones. The lead seal presented here indicates even stronger the use of a Chi-Rho without a Christian message given the combination with a Sol reverse.

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ or PAX?

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69 Bardill 2012 *op. cit.* p. 100, figs. 83, 84.

The recent study by Ramskold on Constantine's SPES PVBLIC coins[70] includes a critical revision of the evidence for the origin of the Chi-Rho. However, the study did not include a discussion of the possibility that the P and X originally were not the Greek letters Chi and Rho at all, at least not representing the first letters in ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (CHRISTOS, Christ), but the Latin P and X[71]. That interpretation could suggest that the two letters stood for PAX, not for Christ[72]. Lewis (2003)[73] suggested that the monogram was ambiguous, allowing the reading PAX to Latin-speakers (where Christians would read it as the peace of Christ) and ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ to Greek-speakers. This interpretation presupposes that Constantine's sign had a religious meaning from the very beginning. The lead seal described in this study renders that interpretation unlikely.

Hahn (2021)[74] also suggested the reading PAX, but without any religious undertones. Instead, PAX would be the peace built on military power ("ein Zeichen seiner friedenssichernden militärischen Gewait", "Macht = Friede" in Hahn's interpretation). This approach appears to mirror modern concepts of terror balance: a superior military power may deter potential enemies from attack. But Constantine, like other Roman emperors, built and maintained armies to be used, not to lay idle. The idea that Constantine would go into battle under a banner proclaiming Peace, with his soldiers carrying shields with Peace written on them, not just in the battle of the Milvian Bridge but in every battle after that is, in our view, too far-fetched to be credible[75]. It would be Orwellian Newspeak. In our view, Constantine was not a peace-maker, he was a ruthless ruler and he

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70 Ramskold 2020 *op. cit.*

71 W. Hahn pers. com. 21 January 2021; W. Hahn, *Wie christlich war das Siegeszeichen des Kaisers Konstantin?* Money Trend 4/2021, pp. 38-39; P. E. Lewis, *The Origin of the Chi-Rho Monogram as a Christian Symbol.* Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia 14 (2003), 19–31, see p. 26.

72 G. Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art: With Illustrations from Paintings from the Renaissance.* New York: Oxford University Press 1959, p. 90.

73 Lewis 2003 *op. cit.*

74 Hahn 2021 *op. cit.*

75 The labarum, the carrier of the Chi-Rho, was certainly not a peace-maker. It was not used as a deterrent but quite the opposite: to frighten and kill enemies in battle. Eusebius tells several stories about its powers and how it was feared by the enemy. Eusebius VC VII: "That Victory everywhere followed the Presence of the Standard of the Cross [labarum] in battle. Indeed, wherever this appeared, the enemy soon fled before his victorious troops. And the emperor perceiving this, whenever he saw any part of his forces hard pressed, gave orders that the salutary trophy [labarum] should be moved in that direction, like some triumphant charm against disasters: at which the combatants were divinely inspired, as it were, with fresh strength and courage, and immediate victory was the result." VC XVI: Licinius "admonished his soldiers never to direct their attack against this standard [labarum], nor even incautiously to allow their eyes to rest upon it; assuring them that it possessed a terrible power, and was especially hostile to him." VC XXI: "He [Constantine] orders the Sign of the Saviour's Cross to be engraven on his soldiers' shields. And not only so, but he also caused the sign of the salutary trophy [labarum] to be impressed on the very shields of his soldiers; and commanded that his embattled forces should be preceded in their march, not by golden images, as heretofore, but only by the standard of the cross [labarum]."

played a constant power-game in which everyone else – including his wife, his sons and daughters, his co-emperors, and of course everybody down the line - was a pawn to be used or thrown away.

Roman money bags

There is good reason to think that the Constantinian double-sided imperial seal described in this paper was used to seal a money bag. We have, however, been unable to find any scholarly papers on money bags. Accordingly, to be able to put such lead seals in a context, we will give a brief survey on the matter here.

In antiquity, many kinds of bags and pouches were used to store and transport coins[76]. The type of money bag we are concerned with here is the one most commonly figured, the *marsupium*[77]. This bag was made of leather from a single hide of a small mammal[78]. Suitable animals could be for example rabbits or piglets. By sleeve-pulling the skin of the animal a natural bag was produced[79]. After tanning the hide, the resulting bag would have three closed openings at the lower end. These natural openings would be closed using string[80] (Fig. 17B). The process was the same as for wineskins. Greek pottery from the 5th C BCE figures wineskins in some detail (Fig. 16). The only visible difference between the wineskins and the marsupia is the size, and Roman money bags were in essence small wineskins.

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[76] The Romans also used amphorae and other vessels. The largest Roman hoard ever found, 108,000 coins (weight 620 kilograms) from Misurata in Libya, with closing date 333 CE, was stored in at least 14 clay pots of varying size (see S. Garaffo - M. Mazza (eds), *Il tesoro di Misurata (Libya): produzione e circolazione monetaria nell'età di Costantino il Grande.* Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Roma, Istituto nazionale di studi romani 19-20 aprile 2012. Edizioni del Prisma, Catania 2015). The second largest Roman coin hoard, the early 4th C Tomares hoard of c. 600 kilograms of bronze coins, discovered in Spain in 2016, was stored in 19 amphorae (see A. M. Esquivel, *Il tesoro di Tomares (Siviglia): Notizia di una scoperta.* Annali dell'Istituto Italiano di Numismatica, 61 (for 2015, publ. 2016), pp. 303-306, Tavole. V-VI).

[77] Much later, the *marsupium* lent its name to animals with pouches, the marsupials.

[78] The *marsupium* is sometimes called a "pigskin money bag", see Sotheby's Antiquities, 12 December 2013, New York, lot 42; Ars Historica Archaeology, Summer Archaeology Auction, 7 July 2018, lot 72. However, it is not known which animal/s provided the hide. Perhaps the skin came from a piglet, but a rabbit or hare would also be of suitable size and is in our view more likely.

[79] See https://www.wikihow.com/Skin-a-Rabbit.

[80] Kenwright suggested: "Statues of Mercury, copied from Greek originals of Hermes in his guise as the patron of commerce, often carried a distinctive purse bearing three tassels." (S. Kenwright, *Comitatus Article – Bag and Baggage. A Handbag ??? Some ideas for manly manbags for Roman men. And Ladies.* https://comitatus.net/Comitatus_Article_Bags.pdf, 2009, p. 4). However, the evidence presented in this paper does not support the idea of tassels but instead string closing natural openings, with extending excess leather.

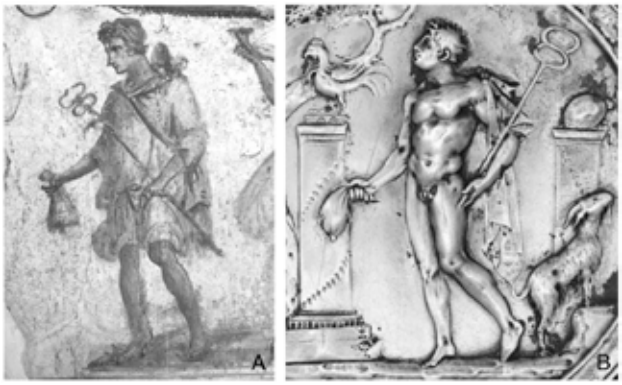

Fig. 17. Money bags carried by Mercury. A, *marsupium* with painted horizontal lines. Detail of a wall painting in the Thermopolium of Lucius Vetutius Placidus (I.8.8) in Pompeii. B. Detail of a Roman silver offering bowl from the Berthouville treasure, with a medallion of Mercury in a rural shrine, 175–225 CE. Paris BnF.

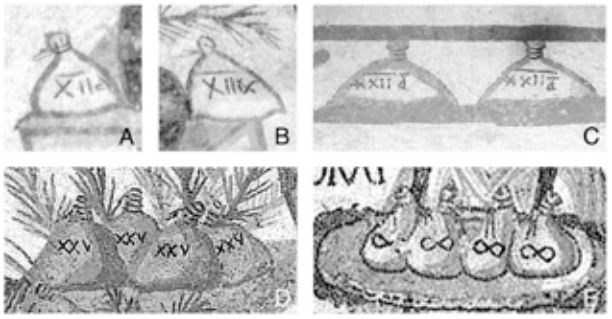

Fig. 18. Details of late 3rd or early 4th C mosaics showing prize money bags marked with value. The bags are full, presumably with coins, and have been closed with string. A, B, money bags on the prize table in the mosaic in the Cubicle of Musicians and Actors, Roman Villa, room no. 42, Piazza Armerina. XIId means 12,500 (denarii). C, money bags on the prize table in the Vestibule of Eros and Pan, room no 43, Roman Villa, Piazza Armerina. The star preceding XIId may mean "denarii". D, detail of a mosaic in the Gafsa Museum, Tunisia, showing prize money bags marked XXV, indicating 25,000 denarii. E, money bags in the Magerius mosaic from Smirat. Sousse, Tunisia. Each bag is marked with the sign for 1,000.

A money bag, i.e. a *marsupium*, was a standard attribute of Mercury, the Roman god of commerce, and is ubiquitous in Roman depictions of the god[81] (Figs 7, 20), Mercury was very popular and for example in Pompeii virtually every house had a wall painting of Mercury, often beside the front door[82].

Prize money bags. When a money bag contained prize money the value of the contents could be written on the outside of the bag. Such is the case in the two occurrences in the mosaics in the Roman Villa, Piazza Armerina, Italy (Fig. 18A-C), in a mosaic from Gafsa, Tunisia (Fig. 18D), and in a mosaic from Smirat, Tunisia (Fig. 18E) [83].

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81 Money bags are also seen with Priapus, e.g. in the famous Pompeiian fresco from the House of the Vettii, showing Priapus weighing his phallus against a money bag: http://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/r6/6 15 01 entrance.htm.

82 Nearly all of these frescoes are lost today, with the exception of the ones taken from Pompeii and now housed in the Naples Museum. Old drawings and paintings of a large number of the lost frescoes are found at http://www.pompeiiinpictures.com.

83 For the mosaic in the vestibule of Eros and Pan at Villa Romana, Piazza Armerina, see S. Ciurca - G. W. Bologna, *Mosaics of Villa „Erculia" in Piazza Armerina - Morgantina*. Nicolò Maltese, Piazza Armerina, 1990, pp. 89-91. For the mosaic in the Gafsa Museum see https://www.flickr.com/photos/giahs/8207289941. For the Magerius Mosaic see https://www.world-archaeology.com/features/magerius-mosaic-smirat-tunisia/.

There are also mosaics and frescoes showing money bags that are not of prize character and that are not associated with a deity[84]. The most detailed is seen in a fresco from the House of Julia Felix in Pompeii (Fig. 19)[85]. The money bag is clearly made of leather, with the upper opening closed by a piece of string, and with the leather cut into strips extending from one of the closed lower openings. Such strips are also seen in other Pompeian frescoes, including the one figured here in Fig. 17A.

Statuettes. Money bags are also present in almost all Roman statuettes of Mercury. There are literally hundreds of such statuettes in museums and private collections. Most are small, 10-15cm, and rather crude. A few are well preserved and detailed, showing how the three lower natural openings are closed with string, and occasionally the contents – coins – are indicated by circles on the outer surface (Fig. 20B).

Coinage. Depictions of money bags are very common on Roman imperial coinage. Mercury was figured on a large number of coins, especially during the 3rd C CE. Also Uberitas was conventionally shown on coins with a money bag in one hand and a cornucopia in the other[86]. Most of these depictions are small, with the money bag only 1-2mm wide, and with little detail, but sometimes the engraver has included the protrusions formed by the closed natural openings (Fig. 21A-C).

In addition, several Roman provincial issues for various games, among others the Olympic Games and the Pythian Games, show money bags on or under the prize table (Fig. 21D, E)[87]. Both these and the imperial issues show that the money bags are *marsupia* made from the hide of a small mammal.

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84 Such unmarked money bags, not associated with a deity, can be seen in a 2nd C mosaic from Rome kept in the Art Institute of Chicago: https://helenmilesmosaics.org/blog/art-institute-of-chicago/; in a mosaic in Hatay Archaeological Museum, Antakya, Turkey: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Antakya_Archaeological_Museum_Detail_of_some_mosaic_7477_edit.jpg; and in a wall painting in Casa dei Ninfeo (VIII.2.28) in Pompeii, now in Naples Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 4675: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R8/8 02 28 p1.htm.

85 The fresco from the House of Julia Felix (II.4.10), Pompeii is in the Naples Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 8598: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R2/2 04 10 p2.htm.

86 After a long period of negligence, Mercury was revived on Roman coinage by Trajan Decius and Herennius Etruscius who figured the god, holding a money bag, on gold, silver and bronze coinage (250-251 CE). The last emperors to figure Mercury on their coins, up to 286 CE, were Carinus and Numerianus. After them, Diocletian and Maximian favored other deities. Uberitas holding a money bag disappeared with the death of Tacitus in 276 CE.

87 Just to mention a few types from different cities: CNG E-auction 502 lot 398, and 415 lot 429 from Thessaloniki; CNG E-auction 466 lot 299 from Ancyra; Obolos Web Auction 9 lot 354 from Perinthus; Coin Galleries Sale April 2010, lot 225 from Philippopolis; Roma Numismatics E-sale 86 lot 745 from Anchialus; Papillon Numismatics 6 lot 318 from Laodikeia; Leu Web Auction 15 lot 1173 from Philadephia; Naumann 89 lot 246, from Cyzikus; Leu Web Auction 10 lot 761 from Odessus; Leu Web Auction 7 lot 717 from Antiochia ad Maeandrum. Leu Web Auction 6 lot 556 from Thyateira; Leu Web Auction 4 lot 532 from Perge.

Archaeology. Archaeological evidence for the use of money bags comes from the large gold hoard found in Trier in 1993[88]. The coins in the hoard, with a closing date of 196/197 CE, appear to have been stored in two or more leather money bags kept in a bronze vessel. One seal box was found in situ with the coins[89] indicating that the money bags were sealed with seal boxes[90]. On discovery, many coins were still stacked in columns[91], something known from other finds[92]. There were no remains of the material used to roll around each staple of coins, and the leather remains found were described to came from the money bag. Another find, from Kalkriese, consists of an early seal box associated with a money purse[93], with the latest coin dated to 2 BCE - 1 CE. There are also finds from the late 3rd C of coin hoards in leather bags[94], the Beau Street in Bath hoard was stored in eight leather bags[95], and the 68 kilograms heavy Seaton Down hoard was contained in a single leather bag[96]. It is unlikely that any of these leather bags were official and they would not have been sealed with imperial seals, but they show that leather bags were used for the storage of coins, as figured in the fresco in Fig. 20.

A note on the "follis". One name for the money bag, Lat. *follis* [97], was later transferred to the coins themselves. It seems that the use of the word 'follis' for a coin is first recorded in a constitution dated 13 October 326 CE, preserved in the Codex Theodosianus[98]. One may also note that the name continued to be

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88 More than 2,500 aurei, totaling 18.5 kilograms, were found during construction works. The closing date of the hoard is 196/197 CE. See K.-J. Gilles, *Der römische Goldmünzenschatz aus der Feldstraße in Trier*, Trierer Zeitschrift. Beiheft 34 (2013); K.-J. Gilles, *Der römische Goldmünzenschatz aus der Feldstraße in Trier*. Reichert 2020, 272 pp.; Knickrehm 2021 *op. cit.* p. 99; also https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trierer_Goldmünzenschatz.

89 Gilles 2013 *op. cit.*, p. 22, figs 3.14, 3.15, 4.9; A. R. Furger - M. Wartmann - E. Riha, *Die Römischen Siegelkapseln aus Augusta Raurica.* Forschungen in Augst 44 (2009), p. 56, fig. 29.19.

90 Seal boxes were used from late Republican times and reached a peak under the Flavian dynasty. One might note that the most common deity on the Flavian seal boxes is Mercury, the god of commerce. By the reign of Constantine, seal boxes had largely gone out of use and some of their functions had been taken over by lead seals.

91 Gilles 2013 *op. cit.*, figs 2.7, 4.7-4.9.

92 Such coin stacks are referred to as "rouleaux", see R. Bland - A. Chadwick - E. Ghey - C. Haselgrove - D. Mattingley - A. Rogers - J. Taylor, *Iron Age and Roman Coin Hoards in Britain*. Oxbow Books, Oxford 2020, p. 210.

93 Furger et al. 2009 *op. cit.* p. 74, fig. 51. See also review by T. Derks, *Seal-boxes in context: a new monographic study from Augst,* Journal of Roman Archaeology 23, 722–727.

94 https://researchworcestershire.wordpress.com/tag/bredon-hill-roman-coin-hoard/

95 Bland et al. 2020 *op. cit.*, pp. 209-210.

96 https://rammuseum.org.uk/collections/local-archaeology/seaton-down-hoard/

97 The noun "follis" has the same roots as English "bellows" and "belly", for example, essentially meaning a "bag".

98 C.Th. VII 20.8. See C. Pharr, *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian constitutions*. Princeton University Press, Princeton 1952, p. 180; B. Drca, *Diocletian and Constantine's Monetary System, or Why 50 000 = 1*. Archaeological Monograph 16, National Museum, Belgrade 2004, p. 23. The constitution reads: "In accordance with our order, veterans shall receive vacant lands and they shall hold them tax exempt in perpetuity. To

used after the death of Constantine I; a wooden tabula dated to 344 CE (through the joint consulships of "Leonti et Sallustio consulibus") preserves a sales contract[99] specifying different kinds of clothing with each price given in folles.

Public collections

ANS American Numismatic Society, New York, NY, USA.
Athens National Archaeological Museum, Athen, Greece.
Copenhagen Nationalmuseet, København, Denmark.
Dumbarton Oaks Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Harvard University, Washington, DC, USA.
Köln Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Köln, Germany.
London BM British Museum, London, UK.
Lyon Lugdunum Museum (former Musée gallo-romain de Lyon-Fourvière), Lyon, France.
Milan Gabinetto Numismatico, Musei del Castello Sforzesco, Milano, Italy.
Mougins Musée d'Art Classique de Mougins, Mougins, France.
Naples Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, Napoli, Italy.
Paris BNF Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des monnaies, médailles et antiques, Paris, France.
Reims Musée Saint-Remi, Reims, France.
Saarbrücken Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Saarbrücken, Germany.
Sousse Archaeological Museum, Sousse, Tunisia.
Tolouse Musée Saint Raymond, Tolouse, France.
Trier Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, Trier, Germany.
Vienna KHM Münzkabinett, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Vienna, Austria.

Auction Catalogues and e-auctions referred to:
CGB *Compagnie Générale de Bourse, Paris, France. Live* Auction June 2017.
CNG Classical Numismatic Group, Inc., Lancaster, PA, USA and London, UK. 67 (2004), 85 (2010), 87 (2011), 93 (2013), E-auction 283 (2012),
415 (2018), 466 (2020), 502 (2021).
Coin Galleries Coin Galleries, Beverly Hills, CA, USA. Auction April

purchase necessary equipment for the land, they shall receive twenty-five thousand folles of money in cash, a yoke of oxen, and a hundred measures of assorted grains." The place of issue is given as Constantinople. However, Constantine was away from Constantinople between March 326 and June 327. The consuls are given as Constantine Augustus and Constantius Caesar, which can only indicate 326, so we believe that the place of issue is in error, but the date is correct.

99 TimeLine Auctions 6 Dec 2016 lot 5, a wooden tabula from the 1950's collection of the Belgian collector Albert Sfez; to be published in Münchner Beiträge zur antiken Papyrologie und Rechtsgeschichte.

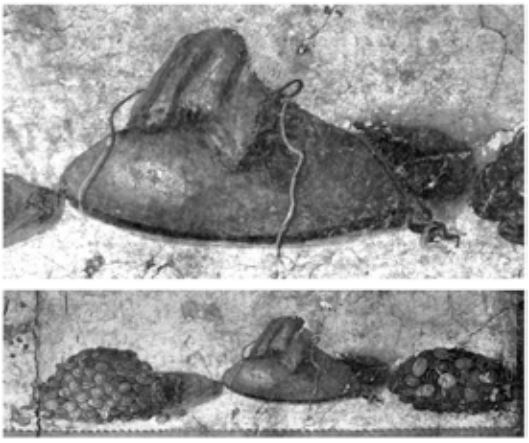

Fig. 19. Lower image: fresco showing a money bag between two piles of coins. The dark patch bordering on the right side of the bag is the shadow of the bag. Upper image: detail with cracks and encrustations retouched. House of Julia Felix (II.4.10), Pompeii. Naples, inv. no. 8598. Detail of photo © Alamy, used with permission.

Сл. 19. Доња слика: фреска која приказује врећицу за новац између две гомиле новца. Кућа Јулије Феликс (II.4.10),Помпеји. Напуљ, inv. no. 8598. Детаљ слике © Alamy, уз одобрење за јавну употребу

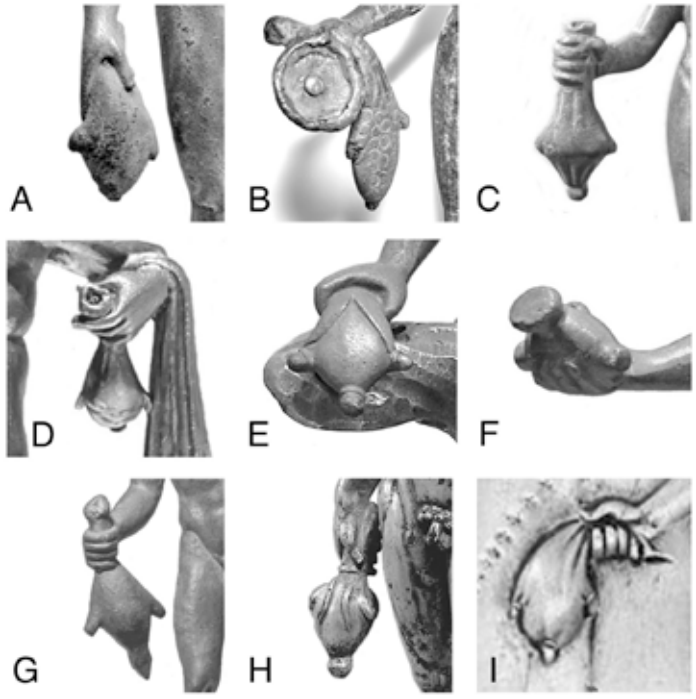

Fig. 20. Money bags (*marsupia*) carried by Mercury. A-H, details of bronze (H is gilt) and silver (D) statuettes of Mercury holding a money bag, 1st – 2nd C CE unless noted. Figs. E and I show that the money bag was a hide from an animal, with three natural openings closed with pieces of string, similar to a wineskin. A, Lyon, inv. br.045, height of figured area 23mm. © Alamy, used with permission. B, detail showing a patera and a money bag, note how the surface is covered in circles indicating coins, Tolouse, inv. 25566. Height of figured area 24mm. Adapted from Wikimedia Commons. C, a money bag with folds. Adapted from photo by Stéphane Lancelot, Inrap. D, Macon Treasure, London BM, 150-220 CE. Adapted from Wikimedia Commons. E, detailed money bag. Reims, inv. 985.20.1. Figured area c. 40x40mm. Adapted from Wikimedia Commons. F, Saarbrücken. Adapted from Wikimedia Commons. G, Sothebys Antiquities 12 December 2013, New York, lot 42. H, Money bag with the ends of the upper closing string hanging down, the Bavay statuette of Mercury, gilded bronze, Gallo-Roman, Bavay (Nord-Pas-de-Calais). Mougins. I, detail of Fig. 16B.

Сл. 20. Врећице за новац (*marsupia*) које носи Меркур.

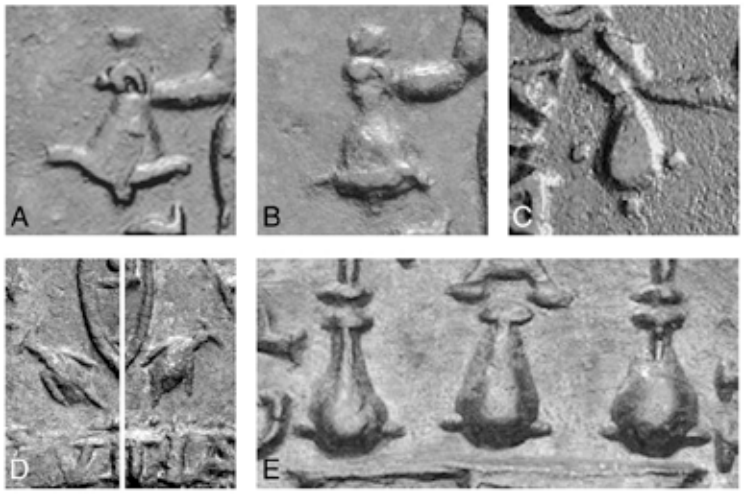

Fig. 21. Details of coins showing money bags on Roman coinage. A-C, money bags held by Mercury, D-E, money bags on prize tables. A, sestertius of Herennius Etruscus as Caesar, 250 CE, CNG E-auction 283 lot 394. B, another, TimeLine Auctions 117 lot 3666. C, Pseudo-autonomous issue from Eucarpeia, Phrygia, time of Hadrian, 117-138 CE, Leu Web Auction 15 lot 1238. D, two details of the reverse of a bronze coin for Gallienus and Salonina (254-268 CE) from Perge (Pamphylia), celebrating the Olympic games held in the city in honor of Augustus, showing a prize money bag on either side of an agonistic prize table. Each area figured is 6x12mm. Leu 2 lot 189. E, three money bags on a money chest, Maximinus I (235-238 CE), from Perge (Pamphylia), CNG 93 lot 842.

Сл. 21. Детаљи новца који приказују врећице у римском новчарству.

2010.
Gorny & Mosch Gorny & Mosch, Giessener Münzhandlung GmbH, München, Germany. 276 (2021).
Leu Leu Numismatik AG, Zürich, Switzerland. 2 (2018), Web Auction 4 (2018), 6 (2018), 7 (2019), 10 (2019), 15 (2021).
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Naville Naville Numismatics, London, UK. 33 (2017).
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ОЛОВНИ ПЕЧАТ СА ПРЕДСТАВОМ КОНСТАНТИНА I И ЊЕГОВИМ ПОБЕДОНОСНИМ ЗНАКОМ ХИ – РО И *COMES* SOL, СА БЕЛЕШКОМ О РИМСКОЈ ВРЕЋИЦИ ЗА НОВАЦ

У раду се говори о налазу јединственог римског царског оловног печата. Фронтално су фигуре цара са шлемом, фланкиран са једне стране симболом Хи- Ро и са друге ознаком AVG N. Комбинација ових мотива указује да је реч о цару Константину I. Две рупе на странама печата указују да се ту налазила трачица која је коришћена за затварање врећице за вредности и новац. У раду се дискутује о томе да се на печату појављује Хи Ро симбол, а да је истовремено задржан мотив Сола до 318. године. Хи Ро је коришћен првобитно не као знак хришћанства већ Константинов лични, победоносни знак. Постоје и други показатељи повезаности са Солом: Константин носи соларну круну, затим и Константинов славолук (315. године) има бројне референце у вези са солом, на послетку и порфирни стуб Константинов (328. године) приказује цара са атрибутима Сола (соларна круна и глоб). Римске торбице за новац су посебан део рада. Сачувана је представа такве торбице коју држи Меркур или Уберитас, а такође и на новцу. Торбице су по свим приликама биле од животињске коже.