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Title	Numismatic evidence and the succession to Constantine I
Authors	Woods, David
Publication date	2011
Original Citation	Woods D; (2011) 'Numismatic Evidence and the Succession to Constantine I'. Numismatic Chronicle, 171 :187-196.
Type of publication	Article (peer-reviewed)
Link to publisher's version	http://www.numismatics.org.uk
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Download date	2024-04-24 08:21:32
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/731

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The Numismatic Chronicle 171 Offprint

Numismatic Evidence and the Succession to Constantine I

by

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LONDON
THE ROYAL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
2011

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DAVID WOODS

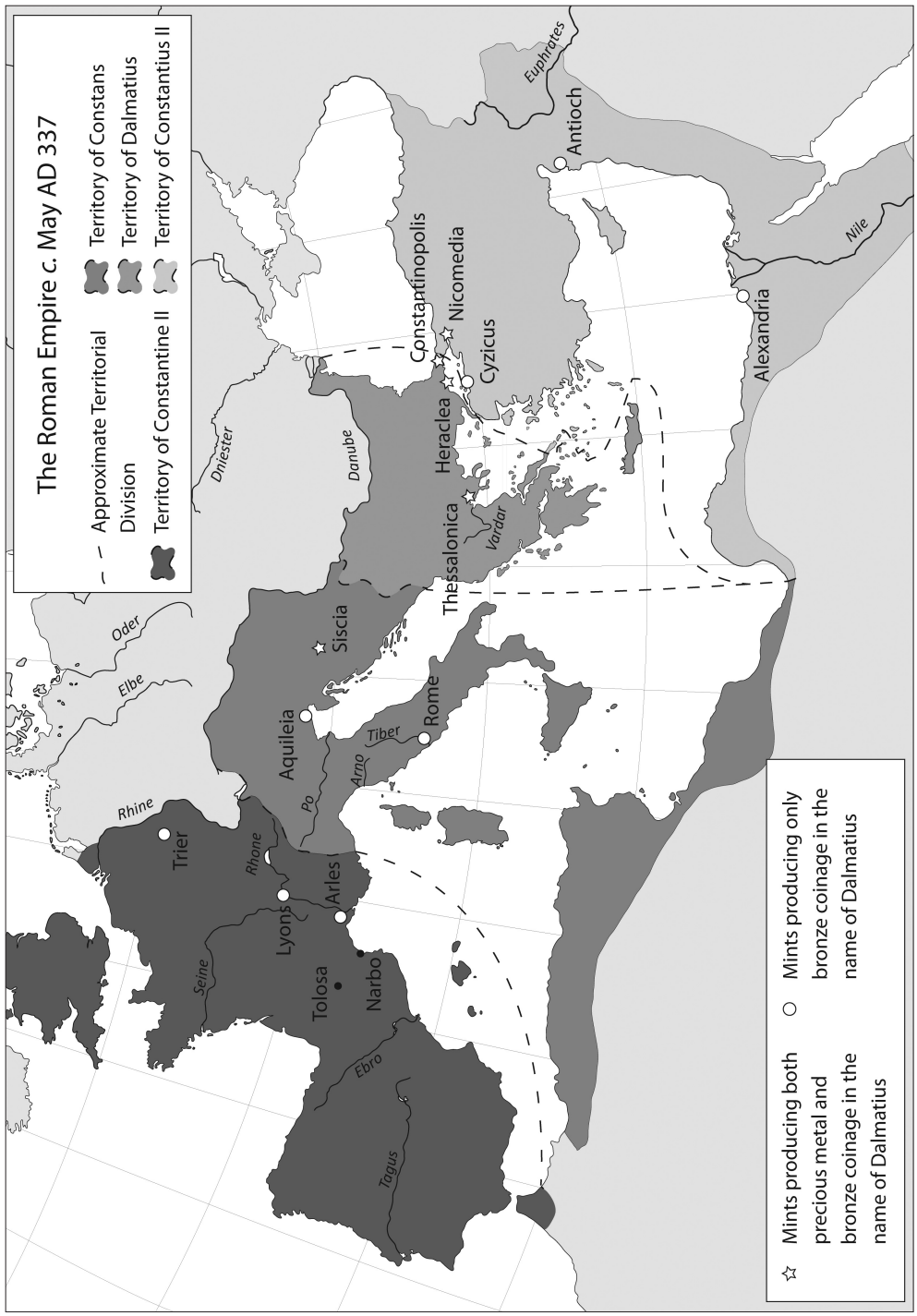
[PLATE 26][1]

CONTROVERSY surrounds the sequence of events between the death of Constantine I near Nicomedia on 22 May 337 and the promotion of his three surviving sons – Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans - from the rank of Caesar to Augustus in Pannonia on 9 September following.[2] The primary problems concern the date of the massacre of most of their male relatives within the wider Constantinian family, including Dalmatius their cousin and fellow Caesar, together with his chief supporters, and the establishment of responsibility for this event. Unfortunately, the earliest surviving literary sources allude only fleetingly to the events of this crucial period and their authors clearly felt inhibited by the continued reign of one of the biggest benefactors of the events of that summer, Constantius II, from treating them as fully and frankly as they might otherwise have done. On the other hand, later authors are usually prejudiced against Constantius II at least, if not his father and brothers also, chiefly on account of their religious policies, so that their accounts are not necessarily as reliable as they may at first seem, even when they do not actually contradict one another, which they often do. Hence there is a need to look beyond the literary sources and to extract the maximum information possible from the only exactly contemporary evidence that we have for the events of 337, the coinage. Burgess seeks to do precisely this in a recent paper where he reconstructs the events of the summer in detail, relying chiefly on a careful analysis of the coin data.[3] The purpose of this note, however, is to highlight the hidden assumptions underlying his subsequent interpretation of the results of his analysis of the coin data, the fact that the evidence does not always prove what he claims it to prove, and to suggest an alternative interpretation of the analysis where possible.

[1] For permission to reproduce the photographs I thank the BM (**Plate 26, 3 and 7**), and Classical Numismatic Group, Inc. (**Plate 26, 1-2, 4-6**).

[2] For the dates, see the *Consularia Constantinopolitana* s.a. 337. The controversy receives passing treatment in many works on Constantine. Most recently, see e.g. P. Stephenson, *Constantine: Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor* (London, 2009), pp. 289-93; R. Frakes, 'The dynasty of Constantine down to 363', in N. Lenski (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 91-107, at 98-9. For more detailed treatments, see e.g. M. Di Maio and D.W.-H. Arnold, '*Per Vim*, *Per Caedem*, *Per Bellum*: a study of murder and ecclesiastical history in the year 337AD', *Byzantion* 62 (1992), pp. 158-211; R. Klein, 'Die Kämpfe um die Nachfolge nach dem Tode Constantins des Großen', *Byzantinische Forschungen* 6 (1979), pp. 101-50; J.W. Leedom, 'Constantius II: three revisions', *Byzantion* 48 (1978), pp. 132-145, at 132-36; X. Lucien-Brun, 'Constance II et le massacre des princes', *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé* ser. 4 (1973), pp. 585-602.

[3] R.W. Burgess, 'The Summer of Blood: the "Great Massacre" of 337 and the promotion of the sons of Constantine', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 62 (2008), pp. 5-50. The length of this paper and the technical nature of much of its discussion increase the risk that many readers will simply skip to the conclusions (pp. 42-3, Section VI) rather than read through it in full: hence the need for the present note. For an uncritical repetition of its conclusions by one senior scholar, see T.D. Barnes, *Constantine: Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire* (Chichester, 2011), pp. 17-18.


The Roman Empire c. May AD 337
Approximate Territorial Division
Territory of Constantine II
Territory of Constans
Territory of Dalmatius
Territory of Constantius II
Mints producing both precious metal and bronze coinage in the name of Dalmatius
Mints producing only bronze coinage in the name of Dalmatius
Oder
Elbe
Rhine
Dniester
Danube
Euphrates
Nile
Seine
Rhone
Po
Arno
Tiber
Vardar
Ebro
Tagus
Trier
Lyons
Arles
Tolosa
Narbo
Aquileia
Siscia
Rome
Thessalonica
Heraclea
Constantinopolis
Nicomedia
Cyzicus
Antioch
Alexandria

Constantine I promoted Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans to the rank of Caesar in March 317, November 324, and December 333 respectively.[4] However, he also promoted his nephew Dalmatius as Caesar in September 335, and appointed Dalmatius' younger brother Hannibalianus as *rex regum et gentium ponticarum* 'King of Kings and of the Pontic Races' at the same time.[5] It is tempting to assume that the sudden promotion of Dalmatius to rank alongside Constantine's sons caused tensions and jealousies and that this was somehow related to the massacre following Constantine's death, but the earliest literary sources actually blame the deaths on some form of military disturbance or riots that Constantius II failed to control or punish rather than upon a deliberate conspiracy by him, with or without the knowledge of his brothers.[6] While one is inclined to dismiss these claims as imperial propaganda after the event designed to protect the reputation of Constantine's sons, Constantius in particular, one cannot be sure. One of the merits of Burgess' paper, therefore, is that he demonstrates how the coin evidence proves that Constantine's sons had always resented the promotion of Dalmatius as Caesar, and had afforded the minimal official recognition to it.[7] He draws attention to the fact that between the promotion of Dalmatius and the death of Constantine I, six mints struck gold coins regularly and seven struck silver coins regularly, but that three of these mints failed to produce any precious metal coinage in the name of Dalmatius, those at Trier, Rome, and Antioch.[8] Given that Trier was the principal residence of Constantine II, that Rome was the nearest mint to Constans' prinicipal residence in Milan, and that Antioch was the principal residence of Constantius II at that time, Burgess concludes that it is no accident that these three mints alone failed to produce any precious metal coinage in the name of Dalmatius, that each of Constantine's sons took a deliberate decision not to strike any of the prestige precious metal issues used to reward the army and civil service in the name of Dalmatius. There is one potential weakness with this argument, however, the fact that, as Burgess himself accepts, Dalmatius seems to have suffered *damnatio memoriae* after his death.[9] It is possible, therefore, that the reason why no precious metal coinage survives in his name from what one might call

[4] *Consularia Constantinopolitana* s.a. 317, 324, 333.

[5] On the date, see the *Consularia Constantinopolitana* s.a. 335. On Hannibalianus' title, see *Anonymus Valesianus* 35; Polemius Silvius, *Laterculus* 1.63. The ancient literary sources normally refer to 'Dalmatius', while the coinage normally spells his name 'Delmatius'. See *RIC* 7, p. 31. I follow the modern convention in referring to him as 'Dalmatius'. See *PLRE I*, p. 241. On the division of territories between the four Caesars in 335, as noted on the map, see *Anonymus Valesianus* 35; *Epitome* 41.20.

[6] See Libanius, *Or*. 59.48-49; Julian, *Or*. 1.18D, 20B; Eutropius, *Breviarium* 10.9.1; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or*. 4.21.

[7] Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', pp. 21-2 (Section III.2).

[8] For gold coinage in the name of Dalmatius, see *RIC* 7, Siscia no. 247; Thessalonica no. 213; Constantinople nos 98, (**Plate 26, 1**),102, 113. For silver coinage in his name, see *RIC* 7, Thessalonica no. 217; Heraclea no. 147; Constantinople no. 136A (in Addenda) (**Plate 26, 2**); Nicomedia no. 186. For silver in the name of Hannibalianus, see *RIC* 7, Constantinople no. 100.

[9] Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', p. 13 (Section III.1). It is wrong to claim, however, that the condemnation of his memory, and that of his uncle Julius Constantius, proves that the massacre was no accident (p. 27). It need not prove any more than that Constantius II and his brothers did not consider Dalmatius and his family entirely innocent victims of the military mutiny, and were prepared to take advantage of the fact that they were already dead, rather than that they had always wanted them dead.

the home mints of Constantine's sons, is that it was precisely at these locations, or in a treasury filled with the product of Antioch in the case of Constantius II who had quickly moved to Constantinople following the death of his father, that the *damnatio memoriae* was most strictly enforced, and that no ambitious courtier, whether civil servant or military officer, would have dared to be caught in possession of coinage in his name. Nevertheless, Burgess' inference is valid on the surviving evidence, so that it seems reasonable to conclude, on balance, that Constantine's sons did take deliberate decisions not to strike precious metal coinage in the name of Dalmatius at their home mints. The importance of this discovery is that it provides objective, contemporary evidence that they did resent his promotion as Caesar, and real grounds to suspect that one or more of them could have plotted his death subsequently.

The promotion of Dalmatius as Caesar raises the question as to what Constantine's plans for his succession had been. The fact that he had appointed a college of four Caesars by the time of his death suggests that he had wanted the empire to continue to be governed by some form of college of emperors. The difficulty lies in determining how many Augusti he had intended this college to contain. There are three obvious possibilities, that he had wanted it, first, to continue to take the form that it had during his later years, with a single Augustus assisted by several Caesars, or, second, to revert to the situation under Diocletian when two Augusti had been assisted by a single Caesar each, or, third, to consist only of Augusti, which became the situation in fact from 9 September 337 onwards. All of these interpretations have had their advocates, but Burgess argues that Constantine had intended to recreate the Diocletianic tetrarchy of two Augusti assisted by a single Caesar each.[10] His evidence for this is that the gold and silver coinage issued between 333 and 337 proves that Constantine was promoting his two eldest sons, Constantine II and Constantius II, jointly and equally above the other two Caesars during this period. For example, the mints produced more types in the names of the two eldest Caesars, often with twinned obverse and reverse types in each case, but without similar issues in the name of the third or fourth Caesars, as appropriate.[11] Similarly, they sometimes produced coins depicting the two eldest Caesars alone in the company of their father, or celebrating the achievements of two Caesars alone, even when there was a third or fourth Caesar also.[12] One readily concedes, therefore, that Burgess' analysis of the evidence is correct, and that Constantine did use the coinage to promote his two eldest sons as alleged. However, the coinage does not itself prove why he did this, and there is a large jump involved in concluding that 'the purpose of such promotion, at the expense of the two youngest caesars, can *only*

[10] Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', pp. 8-9 (Section II), pp. 43-5 (Appendix 1). He argues at length (p. 8, n. 21) against P. Cara, 'La successione di Costantino', *Aevum* 67 (1993), pp. 173-80, who had argued in support of Constantine II succeeding his father as a single Augustus assisted by his brothers and cousin as Caesars still.

[11] See *RIC* 7, Trier nos 565, 566, 567, 568 (early 335); Rome nos 379, 380 (336-37); Constantinople nos. 109, (**Plate 26, 3**), 110, 111, 112, 115, 116, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128 (336-37); Nicomedia nos 181, 182 (335).

[12] For issues depicting two Caesars alone with Constantine, see *RIC* 7, Constantinople no. 88 (335/36), Nicomedia nos 173, 174 (335). For issues whose legends celebrate the achievements of two Caesars alone, see *RIC* 7, Rome nos 340, 341 (333-35), 374, 375 (336-37), all with legend VICTORIA NOB CAESS.

[my italics] have been a result of Constantine's intention to have both sons succeed to his position as augustus'. One alternative interpretation of the evidence springs to mind immediately, that Constantine promoted his two eldest sons in this way only because he was distinguishing between status and performance, that is, that he was celebrating real achievements on the part of his two eldest sons who were old enough to have begun exercising some form of independent command in contrast to the two younger Caesars to whom he had not yet afforded such independence simply because of their youth. Here one notes that Constantine II had been born in 316, Constantius II in 317, and Constans in 323 probably, while Dalmatius' year of birth remains unknown.[13] Hence, Constantine II and Constantius II were 17 and 16 years of age respectively by the beginning of the period of analysis, while Constans may have been only 13 years of age even by the end of this period. In other words, they had probably been recognised as adults throughout this period, while Constans had probably not been recognised as an adult even by the end of it.[14] The fact that Constantine II was less than a year old when he was proclaimed Caesar, and that Constantius II was only seven years of age when he was proclaimed Caesar, suffices to prove that the status of Caesar did not in itself confer the right to exercise any independent command, and that Constantine must have conferred this privilege at some later date. Furthermore, proximity to Constantine himself does not necessarily shed any light on this problem either. Even if Constantine II was normally resident at Trier from 328 and Constantius II was normally resident with his father until 335, as is generally assumed, that does not in itself tell us how much real authority Constantine left with them in either case.[15] It is arguable, therefore, that Constantine's promotion of his two eldest sons on his precious metal coinage during the period 333-337 celebrates their achievements in their own right as increasingly independent adults rather than signifies any longer-term plans concerning the succession. The fact that his adult sons during this period were two in number, the same as the number of Augusti under the Diocletianic tetrarchy, is entirely coincidental. As for the fact that some coin issues depicting three or four Caesars in the company of Constantine depict two Caesars of equal height and much taller than a third and fourth Caesar, this need not tell us any more than their relative age or relative activeness in support of their father.[16]

[13] On the age of Constantine II, see *Epitome* 41.4; Zosimus, *Historia Nova* 2.20.2. On the age of Constantius II, see Eutropius, *Breviarium* 10.15.2; *Epitome* 42.17; Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 2.47. On the age of Constans, see Eutropius, *Breviarium* 10.9.4 and Zonaras 13.6 (born in 320) or *Epitome* 41.23 and Malalas, *Chron*. 13.16 (born in 323). T.D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, MA, 1982), p. 45, prefers to date the birth of Constans to 323 on the basis that a coin dated to 333 depicts him looking significantly younger than his brothers (*RIC* 7, p. 580, Constantinople no. 67).

[14] Tradititionally, boys' arrival at the age of adult citizenship was marked by their adoption of the *toga virilis*, usually at the age of fifteen or sixteen, but there was no fixed age. See B. Rawson, 'Adult-child relationships in Roman society', in B. Rawson (ed.), *Marriage, Divorce and Children in Ancient Rome* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 7-30, at 27-8.

[15] See Barnes, *New Empire*, pp. 84-5. The inferences rest on very slender evidence.

[16] See *RIC* 7, Constantinople nos. 67, 89; Thessalonica no. 204. It is extreme to insist, as does Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', p. 44, that the Caesars ought to be depicted in decreasing size one after the other, whether one is talking of seniority in terms of age or date of promotion as Caesar.

Turning to the massacre itself, Burgess reviews the full range of literary, epigraphic, and papyrological evidence for its date before finally resorting to the numismatic evidence.[17] Here one needs only note that while the literary evidence makes it clear that this massacre occurred soon after the death of Constantine, at the very beginning of Constantius II's reign, it is not clear how soon, for example, 'immediately' or 'not long afterwards', really were in this case.[18] While one is tempted to assume that such terms or phrases must refer to sometime during the summer of 337, as Burgess does, rather than much later the same year, the vague language used by the literary sources simply does not allow this degree of precision. As for the papyrological evidence, one may concur with Burgess that it confirms that Dalmatius' death 'cannot have occurred any later than the end of 337'. Hence the non-numismatic evidence does not allow us to date the massacre any more precisely than sometime during the latter half of 337. However, Burgess next claims that 'the date of the massacre can be pinned down very exactly through an analysis of the immediately contemporary bronze coinage' and proceeds to argue accordingly.[19] Here he builds upon the fact that the frequent change of mintmark at Trier, Arles and Rome allows us to trace the sequence of political events as revealed in the imperial obverses associated with each mintmark. The key points here are that the obverse types of Constantine I and Dalmatius disappear 'at virtually the same time', while obverse types continue to be struck in the names of Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans as Caesars. But what is the significance of the fact that the obverse types of Constantine I and Dalmatius cease to be struck at virtually the same time? Burgess jumps to the conclusion that this proves that Dalmatius was killed very soon after Constantine's death. Hence he dates his murder to early June, shortly after the death of Constantine on 22 May. However, while there is no reason to doubt that the cessation of the obverse type of Constantine I marks the arrival of news of his death at each of the locations concerned, there is another possibility in the case of Dalmatius. Here one must pay due attention to the fact that the failure of Constantine's sons to strike precious metal coinage in the name of Dalmatius at their home mints proves that they had been hostile to him from the start of his reign, as already argued by Burgess. Hence it is possible that the real reason that the mints at Trier, Arles and Rome ceased to strike the obverse type of Dalmatius at about the same time as they ceased to strike the obverse type of Constantine I is that Constantine's sons immediately ordered the cessation of even bronze coinage in the name of Dalmatius as soon

[17] Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', pp. 29-33 (Sections IV.1-5).

[18] See e.g. Eutropius, *Breviarium* 10.9.1: *haud multo post* ('not long afterwards'); Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 41.22: *confestim* ('immediately'). Eutropius (10.12.1: *non multo post*) uses an almost identical expression to report that the usurper Magnentius was defeated at the battle of Mursa not long after the death of Nepotian in Rome, but Nepotian was killed on 30 June 350, whereas the battle at Mursa occurred on 28 September 351.

[19] Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', pp. 33-5 (Section IV.6). For the bronze coinage issued in the name of Dalmatius, see *RIC* 7, Lyons nos 272, 288; Trier nos 587, 588; Arles nos 391, 398, 399, 406; Rome nos 368, 369, 385, 395; Aquileia nos 135, 142, 147; Siscia nos 239, 247, 256, (**Plate 26, 4**), 266; Thessalonica nos 227, 228; Heraclea nos 142, 155; Constantinople nos 77, 84, 141, 142, 153; Nicomedia nos 194, 203, 204; Cyzicus nos 116, 117, 131, 132, 133, 144, 145, 146; Antioch nos 90, 112; Alexandria nos 62, 69.

as they learned that their father was no longer alive to enforce even this minimum recognition of Dalmatius as Caesar. In short, the disappearance of the obverse type of Dalmatius may mark the new freedom felt by Constantine II and Constans to display their longstanding rejection of Dalmatius as a fellow Caesar rather than the arrival of news in the West that Dalmatius had been killed. For this reason, therefore, it does not necessarily contribute much to the problem of dating the massacre of Dalmatius and his relatives.[20] At the most, such early public rejection of Dalmatius' status as Caesar suggests that difficulties probably came to a head earlier rather than later during the second half of 337, but no more precision is possible.

Burgess also attempts a fresh analysis of two new reverse types on the bronze coinage that were struck in the name of Helena, the first wife of Constantius I, and grandmother of the sons of Constantine I, and in the name of Theodora, the second wife of Constantius I, and the grandmother of Dalmatius.[21] The reverse associated with Helena depicted the personification of Pax, a standing woman holding an olive branch and a transverse sceptre, surrounded by the legend PAX PUBLICA, while the reverse associated with Theodora depicted the personification of Pietas, a standing woman holding her right breast with her right hand and a baby on her left arm, surrounded by the legend PIETAS ROMANA. These reverse types were struck at only the three mints of Trier, Rome, and Constantinople, the principal residences by then of Constantine II, Constans, and Constantius II respectively.[22] However, these mints did not begin striking these new types at the same time. Nor did they strike them in the same quantities or with similar regularity. That at Trier began issuing them while Constantine's sons were only Caesars still, and continued to issue them in large numbers throughout various mintmarks until the death of Constantine II *c*.April 340. In contrast, the mints at Rome and Constantinople did not begin to strike these types until Constantine's sons had already been proclaimed Augusti, and issued them with far less regularity. Burgess argues that these facts suggest that Constantine II, whose normal residence was at Trier, was responsible for the design and production of these new types. This seems a valid inference and is an important contribution to our understanding of the political dynamics at this period. However, the next question concerns the reason why Constantine II chose to produce these new types when he did, particularly that in the name of Theodora. Given that the evidence from Trier proves that these new types were produced almost immediately after the disappearance of obverse types in the name of Constantine I and Dalmatius, and that Burgess has already assumed that the disappearance of the obverse type of Dalmatius points to his death, he naturally concludes that the two new types must

[20] Di Maio and Arnold, '*Per Vim*', p. 195, n. 211, realized that there was no necessary connection between Constantine II's decision to cease issuing coins in the name of Dalmatius and the latter's death, even if their precise explanation for his decision is no longer valid because it rests on a poor emendation of Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 41.15 (see Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', p. 15, n. 48).

[21] Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', pp. 22-4 (Section III.2).

[22] For the PAX PUBLICA reverse in the name of Helena, see *RIC* 8, Trier nos 42, 47, 55, 63, 64, 78, 90; Rome nos 27, (**Plate 26, 5**), 53; Constantinople nos 33, 34, 35, 48, 49. For the PIETAS ROMANA reverse in the name of Theodora, see *RIC* 8, Trier nos 43, 48, 56, 65, 79, 91; Rome nos 28, 54; Constantinople nos 36, (**Plate 26, 6**), 50, 51.

have been issued after the massacre of Dalmatius and his relatives. Hence he argues that the type associated with Theodora 'must therefore be seen as an act of expiation to Theodora as the mother of Constantius I's children and grandchildren, nearly all of whom were dead when the type was first issued'. However, the realisation that the cessation of the obverse type of Dalmatius does not necessarily point to his death, as explained above, casts doubt upon this interpretation.

The very fact that Constantine II was responsible for the first issue of this type suggests that, regardless of the precise date of the issue, he was more sympathetic to the memory of Theodora, and the plight of her descendants, than was either of his two brothers. Furthermore, the fact that he refused to recognise Dalmatius as Caesar does not necessarily mean that he harboured any stronger feelings of hostility towards him or his relatives. It is possible, therefore, that he designed and issued the new types in the names of Helena and Theodora before news reached him of the massacre of Dalmatius and his relatives and that he did so in an effort to signal his relatively conciliatory position, that he was prepared to acknowledge and honour both branches of the wider Constantinian family, the descendants of Theodora as well as the descendants of Helena, even if he was not prepared to recognise Dalmatius as Caesar.[23] In other words, these new types were intended to take the sting out of his refusal to continue to issue even bronze coins in the name of Dalmatius. The same medium was used in each case, and the new types were intended to reassure not just Dalmatius and his supporters, but the wider public also, that Constantine II did not support any drastic action against them. The messages on the reverses of these coins made this explicit. The proclamation of PAX PUBLICA was intended to reassure all that he did not wish the current tensions to result in civil war, while the proclamation of PIETAS ROMANA was intended to reassure them that he did not intend any personal harm to those who were, after all, his close relatives, his uncles and cousins. However, events in the East soon overtook his good intentions.

If Constantine II began to issue the new types in the name of Helena and Theodora in an effort to signal his conciliatory position towards his wider family, questions arise as to why he continued with these new types even after news of the massacre had reached him, and why Constans and Constantius II agreed to issue them also, even though the massacre had probably already occurred by the time that they did so. The answers to these questions may well lie in what the brothers thought that it would signal to the public if either Constantine II suddenly discontinued the types or his two brothers refused to issue these particular types even though they were otherwise pleased to co-ordinate their types with him. In either case, it could have looked like a signal of guilt, evidence that they refused to honour Theodora or proclaim Roman piety because they had conspired against her descendants, their close relatives. Hence it may have seemed the least bad option to continue with the types that Constantine II had already begun. The fact that Constans and Constantius

[23] Kent, *RIC* 8, p. 126, proposed that the types in the names of Helena and Theodora were issued at Trier before the massacre, as did Di Maio and Arnold, '*Per Vim*', p. 195, n. 211. Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', p. 24, n. 76, claims that there are 'obvious problems' with this idea, but fails to elaborate. These problems are more likely to relate to possible explanations of Constantine II's motivations in issuing these coins before the massacre rather than to the date of issue itself.

II struck them with less regularity and in smaller numbers suggests only that they did so with a certain reluctance or embarrassment, probably because, as those who benefited the most territorially from the death of Dalmatius, they fell under the greatest general suspicion of having conspired in the massacre. Nevertheless, the messages of the coins were consistent with the official story, that it was rebellious soldiers who had conspired against Dalmatius and his close family rather than his cousins. If one wonders why the three brothers did not continue in the same vein and reinforce their public declaration of innocence of the deaths of Dalmatius and his family by issuing coins in his memory, with the legend DIVO DALMATIO, or some variation thereof, as they were doing in the case of their father, this was because they seem to have inflicted *damnatio memoriae* upon him. One needs to distinguish carefully between their claim that they were innocent of his death, and the claim that Dalmatius was himself innocent of any wrongdoing, although wrongdoing that may have merited exile rather than murder at the hand of rebellious soldiers.

It is an interesting question as to why Constantine II was more sympathetic towards the memory of Theodora, and the plight of her descendants, than was either of his two brothers. One possibility is that he was married to one of his cousins, a daughter of either Flavius Dalmatius or Julius Constantius. He is known to have been married before 336, although the identity of his wife remains unknown.[24] However, the fact that Constantine I married his second son to his cousin, a daughter of Julius Constantius, in 336 suggests that he may well have come to a similar arrangement in the case of his eldest son also.[25] In that case, Constantine II would seem to have been more influenced by his wife and cousin than Constantius II was by his. Furthermore, the family of Flavius Dalmatius, the father of Dalmatius Caesar, may well have enjoyed more sympathy and popularity in Gaul than they did elsewhere. Two facts point in this direction. The first is that Flavius Dalmatius and his family seem to have had the opportunity to develop good connections in this region, since Flavius Dalmatius and his brothers had spent some time in forced retirement at Tolosa before Constantine I recalled them to his court, and Dalmatius the future Caesar was educated for a time by the rhetor Exsuperius at Narbo.[26] The second is the fact that the author of the so-called *Kaisergeschichte* [*KG*], the common source behind many of the surviving fourth-century accounts of this period, and one that was extremely sympathetic towards Dalmatius Caesar to judge from these later accounts, seems to have been from Gaul.[27] Hence Constantine II may have been responding to the genuine concern of many of the elite within Gaul when he issued his new type demonstrating his conciliatory attitude towards Theodora and her descendants.[28]

[24] Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.49.

[25] Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.49; Julian, *Epistula ad Athenienses* 272D; Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum* 69.

[26] Ausonius, *Professores* 17(16).11-12; 18(17).9-11.

[27] On the attitude of the author of the *KG* towards Dalmatius, see Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', p. 15. On the possible identity of this author with Eusebius of Nantes, see R.W. Burgess, '*Principes cum Tyrannis*: two studies on the *Kaisergeschichte* and its tradition', *CQ* 43 (1993), pp. 491-500, at 495-500.

[28] One also notes that the depiction of Pietas holding a child closely resembled the traditional depiction within Gaul of the Romano-Celtic Dea Nutrix. Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', p. 24, emphasizes the similarities between the depiction of Pietas on the coins in the name of Theodora and the depiction of

As Burgess highlights, at the same time that Constantine II began his issue of the new bronze reverse types in the name of Helena and Theodora, Constans began the issue of a new bronze reverse type also, issued only in the name of the three brothers as Caesars, and then continued into their reigns as Augusti.[29] This type was unique to Rome, and depicted the figure of Securitas leaning against a column, surrounded by the legend SECURITAS REI PUB(licae).[30] Burgess argues that 'This [type] indicates that a specific incident *must* [my italics] have taken place in which Constans wanted his audience to believe that the empire's security had been maintained or protected'. There are two assumptions here. The first is that Constans could only have begun issuing this type after the perceived threat to the state was over. In fact, there is no reason why he could not have begun issuing this type while this threat was perceived as present and continuing. Hence he may have begun issuing this type in order to reassure the population that he was aware of the apparent threat and was guarding against it, only to continue to issue it in order to celebrate the fact that he had met it and had guided the state safely through it. The second assumption is that he must have begun issuing this type in response to a specific incident rather than to a general set of circumstances. Although Burgess interprets this type as a response to the massacre of Dalmatius and his relatives, it is equally possible that it is a response to the tense situation more generally that led, several months later, to this massacre rather than to the massacre itself. Furthermore, as the brief civil war between Constantine II and Constans that ended in the former's death *c*.April 340 amply demonstrates, there was tension between the brothers themselves as well as between them and their cousins. Hence the inhabitants of Constans' territory need not have needed reassuring so much against a war between Constans and his cousin to the East as against a war between him and his jealous elder brother to the West. In summary, the fact that Constans ceased issuing bronze coinage in the name of Dalmatius at the same time that he began issuing a new reverse type declaring SECURITAS REI PUB(licae) does not require that these two decisions were related in quite the way that Burgess assumes.

To conclude, while the numismatic evidence has an important contribution to make to our understanding of the succession crisis in 337, it does not provide the decisive support for the main conclusions that Burgess would like to draw from it. This is not to claim that all of his conclusions are necessarily incorrect in themselves. It is possible, even plausible, that Constantine did intend to recreate the Diocletianic tetrarchy after his death. Similarly, it remains possible that the massacre of Dalmatius and his relatives did occur as early as June 337. Unfortunately, however, the numismatic evidence does not in itself allow us to decide either of these matters one way or another.

Fausta on the SALUS REI PUBLICAE and SPES REI PUBLICAE reverse types issued in her name during the period 324-26. This may be entirely coincidental, the result of using the same ultimate model, the Dea Nutrix, in each case. See J. Vanderspoel and M.L. Mann, 'The Empress Fausta as Romano-Celtic Dea Nutrix', *NC* 162 (2002), pp. 350-55.

[29] Burgess, 'Summer of Blood', p. 22 (Section III.2), pp. 34-35 (Section IV.6), p. 41 (Section V), p. 46 (Appendix 2).

[30] See *RIC* 7, Rome nos 402, 403, 404, (**Plate 26, 7)**. See also *RIC* 8, Rome nos 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 22, 23, 33, 34, 35, 44, 45, 46.

PLATE 26

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