The reign of the emperor Constantine (306–337) was as revolutionary for the transformation of Rome’s Mediterranean empire as that of Augustus, the first emperor three centuries earlier. The abandonment of Rome signaled the increasing importance of frontier zones in northern and central Europe and the Middle East. The foundation of Constantinople as a new imperial residence and the rise of Greek as the language of administration previewed the establishment of a separate eastern Roman empire. Constantine’s patronage of Christianity required both a new theology of the Christian Trinity and a new political image of a Christian emperor. Raymond Van Dam explores and interprets each of these events. His book complements accounts of the role of Christianity by highlighting ideological and cultural aspects of the transition to a post-Roman world.

Raymond Van Dam is Professor of History and Director of the Interdepartmental Program in Greek and Roman History at the University of Michigan. He is the author of numerous books, most recently Families and Friends in Late Roman Cappadocia and Becoming Christian: The Conversion of Roman Cappadocia.
THE ROMAN REVOLUTION OF CONSTANTINE

RAYMOND VAN DAM

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
For Jody
“The look, the light in your eyes”
– George Strait, “Carried Away”
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AN EARLY INTEREST IN CLASSICAL STUDIES LED ME INSTEAD TO LATE antiquity. As an undergraduate I was fortunate to study with a classics professor who enjoyed reading patristics texts; as a graduate student I wrote my doctoral dissertation under the supervision of a distinguished historian of the later Roman empire. Their direction expanded my sense of antiquity to include early Christianity and early medieval and early Byzantine history. Now their influence lives on in my own teaching and research. As a teacher I assign my students to read books and articles by Dick Whittaker, my dissertation supervisor. As a researcher I consult volumes of church fathers from the library of Bob Otten, my undergraduate classics professor. At Caesarea in Palestine scholars such as Jerome studied in the great library founded by Origen and augmented by bishop Eusebius. Among the books they read were the writings of Origen and Eusebius. All of us who work as professors deeply appreciate this fulfilling sense of intellectual continuity from our teachers to our students.

Courses on the Roman empire, late antiquity, early Christianity, medieval history, and Byzantine history without fail include Constantine. Since one delight of teaching such courses is the anticipation of the inevitable arguments, over the decades the best critics of my ideas about Constantine and his age have been students, both undergraduates and graduates. During the past several years it has been my privilege to enjoy the company of a remarkable group of graduate students here at the University of Michigan. These students have completed their degrees in my home department of history, my two adjunct departments of classical studies and Near Eastern studies, the Interdepartmental Program in Classical Art and Archaeology, and now our new Interdepartmental Program in Greek and Roman History. Many of them have taught with me as graduate student instructors; they have also shaped my thinking about late antiquity through their own research on ancient and
postclassical history. The highest reward of teaching is the intellectual stimulation of learning from students.

Research is simultaneously a solitary undertaking and a collegial enterprise. We think and write alone, but we also read the books and articles of hundreds of scholars from around the world. The output of publications on Constantine and related issues is both overwhelmingly large and impressively brilliant. A quick count reveals that I have met in person only a small percentage of the contemporary authors cited in my bibliography. It is hence all the more gratifying to acknowledge my pleasure in having met the rest of you in your scholarship.

One essential requirement for research is the kindness of friends. My department generously awarded me a one-semester leave from teaching. The comments from the audience at a seminar organized by the Miller Center for Historical Studies at the University of Maryland were most stimulating, and Ken Holum, Marsha Rozenblit, Art Eckstein, and Jeannie Rutenburg were gracious hosts. Noel Lenski sent me an advance copy of his excellent Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine. Kent Rigsby and Geoffrey Schmalz kindly read and commented on early drafts. As a senior editor at Cambridge University Press, Beatrice Rehl has been an encouraging friend and a wonderful patron saint for all of us in ancient studies.
ABBREVIATIONS

ACW Ancient Christian Writers (Westminster)
Budé Collection des Universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l’Association Guillaume Budé (Paris)
CChr. Corpus Christianorum (Turnhout)
CIL Corpus inscriptum latinum (Berlin)
CSEL Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna)
FC Fathers of the Church (Washington, D.C.)
GCS Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte (Berlin)
ICUR nova series Inscriptiones Christianae urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores, nova series, ed. A. Silvagni, A. Ferrua et al. (Rome and Vatican City, 1922–)
IGR Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanar pertinentes, ed. R. Cagnat et al. (Paris, 1906–1927), Vols. 1, 3–4
LCL Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA)
MGH Monumenta Germaniae historica (Berlin, Hannover, and Leipzig)
## Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td><em>Patrologia graeca</em> (Paris)</td>
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<td><em>Patrologia latina</em> (Paris)</td>
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<td>SChr.</td>
<td><em>Sources chrétiennes</em> (Paris)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teubner</td>
<td>Bibliotheca scriptorum graecorum et romanorum Teubneriana (Leipzig and Stuttgart)</td>
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<td>TTH</td>
<td>Translated Texts for Historians (Liverpool)</td>
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