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Casting an Ecclesiastical Prince:

Portrait Medals of Pope Julius II

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in Art History

by

James Eynon Fishburne

2014

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2014

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Casting an Ecclesiastical Prince:

Portrait Medals of Pope Julius II

by

James Eynon Fishburne

Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Joanna Woods-Marsden, Chair

The portrait medal was arguably the preeminent humanist genre in the Renaissance, yet the medallic commissions of one of the era's most important patrons remain largely unexplored. Pope Julius II Della Rovere (born 1445, reigned 1503-13) commissioned more than two dozen medals, the earliest of which date from his cardinalate. Using semiotics and social art history, I place the medals in their appropriate political and art historical contexts while investigating the various sign systems employed in these complex works of art.

Portrait medals are double-sided objects inspired by ancient Roman coins. They allowed patrons to fashion personae using words and images with references to antiquity and princely authority. The reproducible format was distributed to nobles and diplomats, often with propagandistic intentions. Ruling during an exceptionally turbulent period in which the papacy was threatened by internal and external forces, Julius and his advisors shrewdly exploited portrait medals in order to project an image of strength and reassert Petrine authority.

As the temporal ruler of the Papal States and spiritual leader of Western Christianity, the pontiff was unlike any other sovereign figure in Europe. The unique nature of the position, which encompassed both secular and ecclesiastical roles, was reflected in the medals' inscriptions and iconography. I examine how the medals were used to construct various personae for the controversial cleric who spent much of his pontificate at war. The works of art combined biblical and classical content, thereby presenting the pontiff with a balance of piety and imperial strength. I argue that some medals cast Julius as a pastoral and priestly figure, while others compared him, both implicitly and explicitly, to the emperors of ancient Rome. A thorough study of the medals will provide a greater understanding of the pope's endeavors, including his attempted reorganization of Roman government, the rebuilding of St. Peter's Basilica, and the battle for control over the Papal States.

The dissertation of James Eynon Fishburne is approved.

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2014

*For Professor Joanna Woods-Marsden*

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## PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Fishburne, James Eynon (March 2008). Matteo de' Pasti's Medal of Jesus Christ. Paper presented at the Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference, Los Angeles, California.

\_\_\_\_ (2009). Review of Rebecca Zorach, ed., *The Virtual Tourist in Renaissance Rome*, in *Comitatus* 40 (2009): 343-44.

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\_\_\_\_\_ (2011). Review of Martin Clayton and Ron Philo, *Leonardo da Vinci: The Mechanics of Man*, in *Comitatus* 42(2011): 237-38.

\_\_\_\_\_ (March 2011). Julius the Peacemaker: Portrait Medals of the Warrior Pope. Paper presented at the Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference, Montreal, Canada.

\_\_\_\_\_ (April 2011). Depicting Urban Dominion: Portrait Medals of Pope Julius II. Paper presented at the International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

\_\_\_\_\_ (May 2011). Buried Memories: Foundation Medals of Pope Julius II. Paper presented at the University of Oregon Art History Graduate Student Symposium, Eugene, Oregon.

\_\_\_\_\_ (February 2012). Renaissance Archaeology and the Portrait Medals of Pope Julius II. Paper presented at the UCLA Archaeology Graduate Student Conference, Los Angeles, California.

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\_\_\_\_\_ (March 2012). The Numismatics of Pope Julius II: Coins, Medals, and the Convergence of Two Genres. Paper presented at the Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_ (May 2012). Scorpio Rising: A Numismatic Warning from Pope Julius II. Paper presented at the Renaissance Conference of Southern California, San Marino, California.

\_\_\_\_\_ (2012). Renaissance Visions of a Unified Italy: Pope Julius II's Coins and Portrait Medals, in *Carte Italiane*, Online Journal.

\_\_\_\_\_ (2012). Review of Leonard Barkan, *Michelangelo: A Life on Paper*, in *Comitatus* 40 (2012): 343-44.

\_\_\_\_\_ (March 2013). Fate and the Cosmos: Astrology in the Portrait Medals of Pope Julius II. Paper presented at the Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference, San Diego, California.

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\_\_\_\_\_ (February 2014). Semiotics and Renaissance Numismatics: Portrait Medals of Pope Julius II. Paper presented at the College Art Association annual conference, Chicago, Illinois.

## INTRODUCTION

Pope Julius II Della Rovere (born 1445, reigned 1503-13) was perhaps the most influential pontiff of the Renaissance as well as one of the most important patrons of the Cinquecento.<sup>1</sup> Some of his notable commissions included urban renewal projects in Rome, the painting of the Sistine Chapel ceiling, and the construction of the largest church in Christendom, St. Peter's Basilica. In addition to these monumental undertakings, Julius was also the patron of more intimate works of art, including twenty-six portrait medals, the earliest of which date to his time as a cardinal.

Despite Julius's impact on Rome and High Renaissance art, scholars have virtually ignored these medals. Only one article, written nearly fifty years ago, has been devoted exclusively to the subject.<sup>2</sup> This lacuna is even more extraordinary considering the groundbreaking nature of his medallic corpus. The group of medals was unmatched in terms of diversity and originality of content. Moreover, the sheer number of commissions is astonishing. No patron prior to Julius had more medals, a fact that has been overlooked by numismatists and papal scholars alike.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Julius's exact date of birth is unknown, but it is estimated to be between 1443-45. Christine Shaw concludes that it was most likely 1445. Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 9-11. See Pastor for a full account of the papacy. Ludwig Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), trans., Frederick Antrobus (London: Butler and Tanner, 1923), 185-607.

<sup>2</sup> Roberto Weiss, "The Medals of Pope Julius II (1503-1513)," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 163-82.

<sup>3</sup> To put the amazing size of Julius's medallic corpus into perspective, it is worth comparing it to those of other rulers from the period. Julius had twenty-six medals, including the three from his cardinalate. The only prior patrons to have nearly as many was Pope Paul II, who had twenty-two true medals and Sigismondo Malatesta, who also had twenty-two. Hill catalogued a number of uniface and oval objects of Paul II that were not actually medals. These objects may have been meant to function like seals rather than medals. For Paul II's commissions, George Francis Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini, Volume I* (London: British Museum, 1930, reprinted, Florence: SPES, 1984), cats. 737-39, 759-87. For Sigismondo Malatesta, Hill, cats. 33-34, 163-66, 173-86, 190-91. Savonarola had twelve medals. Hill, cats. 1072-83. Lodovico Sforza had fourteen medals. Hill, cats. 644-51, 654, 670, 679-81, 692.

This dissertation represents the first in-depth study of the pope's portrait medals. Prior attempts to address the corpus have been largely superficial and devoid of serious analysis. In order to amend these deficiencies I intend to situate the works of art within the political and artistic contexts of Julius's career while applying new theories and art historical methodologies to the material. The pontiff is known for having played a crucial role in shaping High Renaissance art; much of his patronage was unabashedly grandiose, with his commissions frequently transgressing established conventions. What has not been understood is that this group of medals also represents a paradigm shift, in this case within the numismatic realm.

Scholars have frequently invoked several of the pope's medals as subsidiary evidence in order to justify claims about the pontiff's larger commissions. Unfortunately they do not explore the smaller works of art for their own historical value. Most famously, Caradosso Foppa's medal of St. Peter's has been used repeatedly as nothing more than an unquestioned example of Bramante's earliest vision of the basilica (fig. 1).<sup>4</sup> Such usage ignores fundamental questions about iconographic invention, composition of inscriptions, and the artworks' intended functions within the high-status circles in which they first circulated.

Merely lavishing more attention on the exquisite medals would provide insight into the commissions and Julius's pontificate, but my investigation goes far beyond formal analysis. By addressing the circumstances of their production and interrogating the sign systems comprising their content, I hope to avoid the pitfall of simply assigning predetermined meaning to the medals. As with other forms of Renaissance art, I argue that medals should be credited with creating meaning in relation to the dynamic social and political contexts in which they were

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<sup>4</sup> Even in a very recent Renaissance survey, Caradosso's medal functions as a simple illustration of Bramante's early plan for St. Peter's Basilica. Stephen Campbell and Michael Cole, *Italian Renaissance Art* (New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 2012), 345-46. See also Frederick Hartt and David Wilkins, *History of Italian Renaissance Art* (London: Prentice Hall, 2011), 492.



produced. These double-sided, classicizing art objects combined the literary with the visual, and they must be deciphered with knowledge of the sign systems that they employ, combine, and ultimately transgress.

### **Medals, Semiotics, and Social Art History**

The portrait medal was first and foremost a visual medium, as it was defined by the inclusion of an image of an individual. Text, however, was also a vital component of the genre. Despite language's integral role in medals, it was never deployed in a standardized fashion. Textual features varied widely from one artwork to the next, while a broad range of relationships between linguistic and iconographic elements were featured in Renaissance medals.

Relying on the semiotic theories of Norman Bryson and Roland Barthes, among others, I address the issue of how the two sign systems operated in order to produce meaning and communicate messages.<sup>5</sup> I aim to clarify many of the assumptions that have been insinuated into the process of viewing these highly detailed works of art. I will also articulate a few of the numerous text-image relationships found in portrait medals. Pairings of words and pictures could be incongruous or complementary in nature, and they could function to anchor or relay meaning.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, each of the elements had the capacity to serve connotative and denotative functions. By elucidating the inner workings of the genre, I attempt to explain how patrons used medals to communicate messages, while pinpointing precisely what information was transmitted to the Renaissance audience. I hope to provide a fruitful means of analyzing

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<sup>5</sup> Norman Bryson, *Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1-28. Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 15-19. Charles Peirce, "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," in *Semiotics: An introductory anthology*, ed. Robert Innis (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1986), 9-19. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw Hill, 1966), 65-70.

<sup>6</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 40-41.

Julius's portrait medals that can be applied to the numismatic commission of other Renaissance rulers, thereby allowing for insight beyond the iconographical approaches that are typically applied to the material.

The social and political contexts of High Renaissance Rome are also vital to my investigation. Julius reigned during an exceptionally turbulent period that was fraught with foreign incursions into papal territories, rival church councils, and shifting international alliances.<sup>7</sup> The medals were frequently employed as vehicles for propaganda. As such they provide unique insights into the pope's political motives, and they illustrate his keen ability to perpetuate ideology.

Significantly, the medals offer perspectives that are impossible to glean from his larger commissions. Many of Julius's most ambitious undertakings were not finished until decades after his death, while other projects were abandoned prior to completion.<sup>8</sup> Portrait medals, on the other hand, could be rapidly executed. The time from initial conception to finished product was relatively short—often a matter of weeks—thus they could effectively and immediately comment on events.<sup>9</sup> As a result they provide more accurate insights than St. Peter's Basilica and other

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<sup>7</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 209-78. Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 232-320. J.H. Burns, "Angelo da Vallombrosa and the Pisan Schism," in *The Church, the Councils, and Reform the Legacy of the Fifteenth Century*, eds. Gerald Christianson, Thomas M Izbicki, and Christopher M Bellitto (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 194-200. Nelson Minnich, "The Image of Julius II in the ACTA of the Councils of Pisa-Milan-Asti-Lyons (1511-12) and Lateran V (1512-17)," in *Giulio II: Papa, Politico, Mecenate*, ed. Giovanna Rotondi Terminiello and Giulio Nepi (Genova: De Ferrari and De Vega, 2005), 79-82.

<sup>8</sup> Most famously Julius's tomb and St. Peter's Basilica were not finished until decades after the pope died while the Palace of Justice was abandoned long before completion. Arnaldo Bruschi, *Bramante* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1977), 168-73.

<sup>9</sup> Graham Pollard, Eleonora Luciano, and Maria Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: Volume One, Italy, The Collection of the National Gallery of Art, Systematic Catalogue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), XVII-XXIV.

large-scale projects that were not finished to Julius's specifications, and therefore do not reflect his original intentions.<sup>10</sup>

A portrait medal allowed an individual to fashion his identity with great detail and precision. The exceptional breadth of Julius's medallic corpus allows for a unique opportunity to analyze how a high-profile figure employed the medium over an extended time period. Being able to simultaneously examine all of the medals created throughout his decade-long reign, we are afforded an opportunity that neither the artists nor the patron envisioned when the works of art were commissioned. The medals were not created as a cohesive group. They were instead devised in response to a variety of circumstances. With the privilege of hindsight we can observe how the content developed as the patron's tastes and circumstances changed. It will quickly become clear that Julius's use of medals was not systematic but adaptive. I hope that my study appropriately emphasizes the extraordinary versatility of the medium as well as the shrewdness of the patron.

### **Literature Review: Primary and Secondary Sources**

A plethora of primary sources address Julius's life, his personality, his patronage, and his curia. Records of payment for some of the medals can be found in the account books of the Camera Apostolica, providing insight into how much the artists received for commissions. They also help to establish the chronological window within which the works were produced.<sup>11</sup> The diaries of papal advisers and masters of ceremonies Johannes Burckhardt and Paris de' Grassi are

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<sup>10</sup> Christoph Frommel, "St. Peter's: The Early History," in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture*, eds. Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), 402-08. Michael Hirst, *Michelangelo: The Achievement of Fame, 1475-1534* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 61-70, 199-208.

<sup>11</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 175.

extremely valuable sources as well. They confirm that copies of some medals were placed in the walls of buildings during ceremonies for the laying of foundation stones.<sup>12</sup> Much of Paris de' Grassi's diary, published in 1886 by Luigi Frati, offers a firsthand look into numerous aspects of Julius's life, including the pope's personal interest in art and architecture as well as his day-to-day life while on military expeditions.<sup>13</sup>

Texts written by humanists both inside and outside of Julius's curia provide important contexts for the intellectual and political climate of Julian Rome. One such example is Egidio da Viterbo, an Augustinian preacher close to the pontiff.<sup>14</sup> A proponent of Neoplatonic thought, Egidio had ties to prominent Florentine humanists of the second half of the fifteenth century, and he may have been an advisor on some of the pope's artistic commissions.<sup>15</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli interacted with the pontiff and wrote about him on several occasions.<sup>16</sup> He referred to Julius

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<sup>12</sup> As quoted by Hill, cat. 660, J. Burckardus, *Liber notarum* (Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, xxxii, 2 [1913], p. 509): "Postquam papa posuit ipsum lapidem, muratores posuerunt in quodam vase cooperto duas medaglias aureas valoris ductorum L, et XI vel plures de metallo cum facie pape in capucino, ab una parte, ab alia designation (sic) edificii, prout est in ea quam accepi," and Paris de Grassis (Muratori, *ibid.*, p. 510, n. I, correctis corrigendis): "Quidam faber argentarius... attulit XII monetas novas sive madallias latas sicut est una ostia misse communis, grossas vero sicut costa unius gladioli communis; et ab una parte erat imago pape Julii cum his litteris, videlicet: JVLIVS LIGVR SECVNDVS PONTIFEX MAXIMVS ANNO SVI PONTIFICATVS MDVI, et ab alia erat forma temple sive edificii quod volebat erigere, cum litteris his, videlicet: INSTAVRATIO BASILICE APOSTOLORVM PETRI ET PAVLI PER JVL II PONT MAX et inferius erat hoc verbum videlicet: VATICAN. Weiss, "Julius," 169-70.

<sup>13</sup> Luigi Frati, *Le Due Spedizioni Militari di Giulio II: Tratte dal Diario di Paride Grassi Bolognese* (Bologna: Regia Tipografia, 1886), passim.

<sup>14</sup> John O'Malley, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1979), 27. Ingrid Rowland, *The Culture of the High Renaissance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 144-48.

<sup>15</sup> Egidio da Viterbo worked on his treatise, *Sententiae ad mentem Platonis* "Sentences According to the Mind of Plato," from 1506-13. Rowland, *Culture*, 146-47. Charles Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 308-12. Christiane Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura: Meaning and Invention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 19-21. John O'Malley, "Egidio da Viterbo and Renaissance Rome," in *Egidio Da Viterbo, O.S.A., e Il Suo Tempo: Atti Del V Convegno dell'Istituto Storico Agostiniano, Roma-Viterbo, 20-23 Ottobre 1982*, ed. Institutum Historicum Augustinianum (Roma: Analecta Augustiniana, 1983), 67-84.

<sup>16</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 152-55.

repeatedly in *The Prince*, often characterizing the pope's actions as impetuous.<sup>17</sup> Francesco Guicciardini, among others, was critical of Julius for the wars he waged, and Raffaele Maffei, a curial humanist active in the late Quattrocento and early Cinquecento, criticized the rebuilding of St. Peter's as an unnecessary distraction for the papacy.<sup>18</sup>

Another type of literary source that survives is the architectural inscription. They can be found on a number of buildings that were commenced, renovated, or expanded under Julius.<sup>19</sup> Despite their brevity, they often betray the linguistic preferences of the humanists with whom he associated. Furthermore, they frequently mention the pontiff by name, thereby acting as textual "portraits" of Julius. Unlike most of the other written sources, the inscriptions were viewed by large and diverse audiences, being typically located on the exteriors of buildings. As public representations of the pope, the inscriptions add nuance to the primarily private, courtly images of Julius found on portrait medals.

Few scholars have directly addressed the medals of Pope Julius II. The first publication to discuss all of them was George Francis Hill's *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini*, originally published in 1930, and republished in 1984 with minor additions by Graham Pollard.<sup>20</sup> Without Hill the field of Renaissance numismatics would most likely not exist. His *Corpus*, as the title indicates, covers virtually every Italian portrait medal from the inception of the genre until around 1530. The book can only be characterized as a herculean

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<sup>17</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Russell Price, ed. Quentin Skinner (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), Chapter II, 6; Chapter VII, 28-29; Chapter XIII, 48; Chapter XVI, 56; Chapter XI, 39-42; Chapter XV, 86-87; 97-98, 117, 127.

<sup>18</sup> Francesco Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, Vol. 2 (Milano: Garzanti Libri, 2006), Book IX, Chapter XIII. John D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 123, 222. John D'Amico, "Papal History and Curial Reform in the Renaissance: Raffaele Maffei's *Brevis Historia* of Julius II and Leo X," *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae*, 18 (1980): 157-210.

<sup>19</sup> Christoph Frommel, *Architettura alla Corte Papale nel Rinascimento* (Milano: Electa, 2003), 89-120.

<sup>20</sup> Hill, cats. 222, 224, 225, 226-29, 395, 445, 659-61, 817, 843, 866-77. See preface of Hill for description of changes made by Pollard.

undertaking. Not only does it catalogue an enormous quantity of medals, but it also provides names of artists, dates of the works, and basic information about artists and patrons.

Hill cited primary source documents in his descriptions of many of the medals, and instead of simply assigning a date to each work of art, he offered a brief outline of the reasoning behind his chronology. New documents have been discovered over the past several decades, which have led to some new attributions and dates. While Hill's work largely lacks meaningful analysis of the contexts in which the medals were produced, the *Corpus* is nonetheless a valuable reference for Julius's commissions and the medals of any patron from the period, despite the fact that it was written more than eighty years ago.<sup>21</sup>

Roberto Weiss's article, "The Medals of Pope Julius II," from 1965, the first and only publication dedicated specifically to Julius's medallic patronage, considered the chronology and attributions of the works. Unfortunately Weiss largely ignored how the medals may have functioned, and he did not touch upon broader issues of Julius's patronage apart from numismatics. However, by invoking papal coins attributed to Pier Maria Serbaldi, he offered a convincing argument that switched the authorship of a number of Gian Cristoforo Romano's medals to Serbaldi, and several of Serbaldi's medals to Gian Cristoforo.<sup>22</sup>

Weiss carefully analyzed a number of documents pertaining to the medals, including records of payment and descriptions of medals as building deposits. He also provided interpretations for most of the iconography on the reverses. In doing so he helped to explain the

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<sup>21</sup> Adolfo Modesti's catalogue of papal medals does address all of Pope Julius II's portrait medals as well as some of his coins, but it was designed for collectors and it lacks the scholarly rigor of Hill's *Corpus*. Modesti has some interesting insights into the pope's commissions, but some of his conclusions are spurious. Adolfo Modesti, *Corpus Numismatum Omnium Romanorum Pontificum Volume I* (Roma: De Cristofaro, 2002), 451-517.

<sup>22</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 176-78. Surprisingly few scholars of Renaissance numismatics introduce coins into their discussions of medals, possibly because they are cognizant of the formal and functional differences between the genres, and they are therefore perhaps overly cautious about conflating *objets d'art* and currency. Stephen Scher, "An Introduction to the Renaissance Portrait Medal," in *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, ed. Stephen Scher, (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), 1-7.

impetus for a number of the medals, but in some cases his conclusions were speculative and unconvincing. While I occasionally disagree with Weiss, his article offers outstanding insight into Julius's medallion corpus, and functions as the foundation for my chronology and attributions.

A number of catalogues have addressed some of Julius's medals, but usually in a rather superficial manner since their focus is much broader than a single pope.<sup>23</sup> The greatest value of these catalogues lies in the framework they have constructed for the history of medals. One of the best books is *The Currency of Fame*, edited by Stephen Scher, with contributions from a number of major scholars in the field of Renaissance medals.<sup>24</sup> Published in 1994 as the catalogue of an exhibition, it discusses issues of production, patronage, use, and reception of medals. Another valuable resource is *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, published in 2000, which is a collection of essays that focuses on various aspects of Renaissance medals such as inscriptions, antiquarianism, and iconography.<sup>25</sup>

The most recent work that directly pertains to my topic is *Renaissance Medals: Volume One, Italy*. Published in 2007, it is a catalogue of the collection of the National Gallery of Art in Washington.<sup>26</sup> The extensive introduction offers another outline of the history of medals, with a focus on the technical aspects of medal production. Pollard was again the editor of this volume, and the work was structured after the model of Hill. The smaller scope, however, allowed for more detailed discussions of each medal, and in many cases numerous primary and secondary

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<sup>23</sup> One such example is in Giancarlo Alteri, *Medaglie Papali del Medagliere della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* (Roma: Tipografia Cardoni, 1995), 39-41.

<sup>24</sup> Stephen Scher, ed., *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance* (New York: Abrams, 1994), passim, especially 1-145.

<sup>25</sup> Stephen Scher, ed., *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, (New York, Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), passim.

<sup>26</sup> Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, passim, especially the long introduction.

sources were cited, making the book a valuable bibliographic resource. Although the catalogue does not provide a comprehensive review of Julius's patronage, it nevertheless functions as the most current barometer for the attribution and chronology of a number of his medals.

Christine Shaw is the most prominent scholar in recent years to have worked extensively on Pope Julius II. An historian rather than an art historian, her most significant contribution is *Julius II: The Warrior Pope*, a biography published in 1993. It covers Julius's life from his time as a papal nephew until his death, focusing on the military conflicts and political acrobatics that dominated his career. Although the biography is not without the occasional embellishment or questionable interpretation, Shaw relied heavily on primary sources, including accounts by Julius's two masters of ceremonies as well as other texts produced by those who were not part of Julius's inner circle.<sup>27</sup> Shaw does not dwell on the pope's artistic commissions in the book, but she dedicated an article to the subject in 2005. One of several articles that she wrote on Julius and the Della Rovere, "The Motivation for the Patronage of Pope Julius II" explores various themes in works of art that the pope and those around him commissioned.<sup>28</sup> Her scholarship offers a valuable framework for critically analyzing Julius's career and patronage, and it highlights many of the important sixteenth-century sources pertaining to the pontiff.

Ludwig Pastor's *History of the Popes* is still an important source of information on Julius's papacy.<sup>29</sup> It is more idealizing than Shaw's biography, and at times reads as a mytho-historical account of Julius's pontificate, but it remains a staple for historians and art historians

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<sup>27</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 339-42. Johannes Burckhardt, *Diarium sive Rerum Urbanarum Commentarii (1483-1506)*, ed. L. Thuasne (Paris, 1883-85). Frati, *Le Due Spedizioni Militari di Giulio II*. Niccolò Machiavelli, *Legazioni e Commissarie*, ed. S. Bertelli, 3 vols (Milan, 1964).

<sup>28</sup> Christine Shaw, "The Motivation for the Patronage of Pope Julius II," in *Prince and Princely Culture: 1450-1650*, Volume Two, ed. Martin Gosman (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 43-61.

<sup>29</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 185-607.



alike. One of the main flaws of Pastor's work is that on occasion he simply quoted various nineteenth-century German historians, thus his claims need to be substantiated by other sources.

## **Chapter Summaries**

Rather than addressing the medals chronologically, I approach them thematically, with each chapter acting as a case study. A chronological approach would be overly simplistic and unfruitful since some of the works of art cannot be dated with precision. Using attribution as the primary criterion would also be ineffective. A number of the medals were produced by unknown artists, while on other occasions multiple artists created medals for the same event.<sup>30</sup> The binding tie is the patron, and the case study approach offers the clearest view of Julius's motives. Using this tactic I pursue a number of rewarding avenues of investigation.

This is not to say that dates and artists will be ignored. The first chapter focuses on attribution and dating as well as historical and political context so as to provide a framework within which the medals can be further analyzed. In the second chapter I examine how the medals were used to construct various personae for the controversial cleric who spent much of his pontificate at war. The versatile medium allowed for a balance of piety and imperial strength. The medals were meticulously crafted presentations of a ruler whose duties encompassed both temporal and spiritual obligations. I explore how some medals cast Julius as a pastoral and priestly figure, while others compared him, both implicitly and explicitly, to the emperors of ancient Rome.

Chapter 3 deals with the pope's architectural patronage. He was rebuilding Rome so as to make it a worthy capital of his empire, thus half of his medals feature images of various

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<sup>30</sup> The following medals from Julius's corpus were created by unknown artists: Hill, cats. 817, 874, 876. Serbaldi and Gian Cristoforo Romano created medals for the foundation of the fortress at Civitavecchia and for St. Peter's. Hill, cats. 224, 870, 871, 872.

fortresses, churches, and palaces. I argue that Julius's numismatic commissions functioned as a parallel patronage program that helped to increase the political potency of his building campaign. The medals were used to proclaim the pope's sovereignty and advertise his enormous and immovable commissions. It was an efficient investment since the medals were produced at a price that was miniscule in comparison to the construction projects.

Copies of the medals were deposited in the foundations of Julius's buildings. These time capsules provided a means of communicating with the future in a format inspired by the past, by offering an idealized view of the present. I invoke Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood's theory of the Renaissance notion of time, which states that viewers often treated artifacts as ancient even if they knew that they had been recently fabricated.<sup>31</sup> In light of this theory I propose that placing the medals within the foundations activated the objects so that they would be perceived as belonging to the classical past. The works of art were thus meant to collapse time and portray Julius as an ancient emperor rather than simply as a Renaissance pope.

In the final chapter I shift away from the physical realm and move toward the theoretical in an exploration of text and image in portrait medals. I analyze various relationships between the sign systems, and I clarify how artists intertwined linguistic and iconographic elements so that the works of art could denote and connote meaning.<sup>32</sup> Semiotics is particularly appropriate because it aids in the understanding of signs systems as they were constructed at a particular moment rather than how they change over time. As my study of Julius's medals is synchronic,

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<sup>31</sup> Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, "Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism," *Art Bulletin* 87, no. 2 (2005): 403-06. Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 103-05, 240-46, 290-93. For a full discussion of the use of medals as building deposits, see text at note 50 in Chapter 3.

<sup>32</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 20-37.

semiotic theories are useful in unlocking codes and deciphering meaning in the pope's commissions.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk, *Art History: A Critical Introduction to its Methods* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2006), 220. Peirce, "Logic as Semiotic," 9-19.

## CHAPTER 1

### Setting the Stage: The Patronage of Pope Julius II and the Chronology of his Medals

#### Defining Portrait Medals: History and Conventions

Before addressing Pope Julius II's medallic patronage it is necessary to clarify the history and conventions of this specifically Renaissance genre. In doing so I aim to ground the study in an understanding of how the pope's commissions were intended to function in the early Cinquecento.

A portrait medal is a small, round, double-sided object with a profile portrait on the obverse and emblematic imagery on the reverse, while Latin inscriptions typically circumscribed the images on each side. Medals were commissioned by rulers and other wealthy patrons in order to commemorate significant events as well as to ensure the survival of their legacies.

Portrait medals were usually bronze, but they could be made of gold or silver. The works of art could be struck using engraved steel dies or cast from models made of wax, wood, or stone. Cast medals were typically larger and in higher relief, while struck medals were more coin-like in appearance. Both processes allowed for the production of multiple medals, which enabled patrons to distribute copies to nobles and important diplomats, often with propagandistic intentions. Portrait medals were prized for their tactility and they were meant to be handled by viewers, although they could be displayed in an intimate setting such as a *studiolo*.<sup>1</sup> In some

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<sup>1</sup> The quantities in which medals were produced are difficult to determine. Records on the subject were not kept and the number of examples created varied from one commission to the next. Estimates range from as few as a dozen to more than one hundred. Stephen Scher, ed., *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance* (New York: Abrams, 1994), 13-18. Graham Pollard, Eleonora Luciano, and Maria Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: Volume One, Italy, The Collection of the National Gallery of Art, Systematic Catalogue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), XX, XXVII-XXXVI.

cases copies would be placed in the foundations of buildings in order to be discovered by future generations, thereby preserving the image of the sitter for centuries to come.<sup>2</sup>

The typical narrative regarding the origin of Renaissance portrait medals usually begins with Pisanello at the Council of Ferrara and Florence in 1438-39. It was here that the itinerant court artist cast what is believed to have been the first true medal in a work that depicted the Byzantine Emperor John VIII Palaeologus (fig. 2).<sup>3</sup> This medal, and the ensuing genre, developed out of the near universal admiration for and extreme interest in ancient Roman coins, which were collected by princes, humanists, and artists throughout the Renaissance.<sup>4</sup> The numismatic format of the portrait medal has thus been characterized as a classicizing medium and a humanist genre intended above all for courtly audiences.<sup>5</sup>

Much like Renaissance medals, the currency of antiquity included portraits of rulers on the obverses, while the reverses often featured images of divinities and architecture, among other subjects (fig. 3).<sup>6</sup> Portrait medals were intentionally evocative of ancient coins. Although medals are undoubtedly coin-like, they are quite distinct from coinage. Medals could be commissioned

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<sup>2</sup> Minou Schraven, "Out of sight, yet still in place: On the use of Italian Renaissance portrait medals as building deposits," *RES* 55/56 (2009): 183. Minou Schraven, "Founding Rome anew: Pope Sixtus IV and the Foundation of the Ponte Sisto, 1473," in *Foundation, Dedication, and Consecration in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Maarten Delbeke and Minou Schraven (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 129-46.

<sup>3</sup> Scher, ed., *Currency* 13-21. Luke Syson and Dillian Gordon, *Pisanello: Painter to the Renaissance Court* (London: National Gallery Company, 2001), 114-16. Syson and Gordon contend that Pisanello's first medal may have been that of Filippo Maria Visconti, duke of Milan from 1431 or 1432. This date is based on a correspondence in which Pisanello promised to send the duke a bronze object. It is also based on the similarity in the composition between the reverse of the Visconti medal and the style of the fresco in Sant'Anastasia, Verona.

<sup>4</sup> Roman coins were extremely plentiful during the Renaissance. These portable antiquities were valued for the insight they provided into the lives of ancient rulers. John Cunnally, "The Role of Greek and Roman Coins in the Art of the Italian Renaissance" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984), 1-20. John Cunnally, *Images of the Illustrious: Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 25.

<sup>5</sup> Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Art and Political Identity in Fifteenth-Century Naples: Pisanello, Cristoforo di Geremia, and King Alfonso's Imperial Fantasies," in *Art and Politics in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Italy: 1250-1500*, ed. Charles Rosenberg (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 11-15.

<sup>6</sup> R.A.G. Carson, *Coins of the Roman Empire* (New York: Routledge, 1990), passim.

by anyone, whereas coins were produced by governing authorities and used as currency.<sup>7</sup> As such, coins were subject to strict compositional standards, while portrait medals were not regulated with regards to size, weight, or metallurgic content.

Following the Council of Florence and Ferrara, the new and exciting medium spread rapidly throughout the courts of Northern Italy and had made its way to Rome by the middle of the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The importance of papal medals is often minimized in numismatic scholarship. The commissions are typically treated as nothing more than a sub-category of works by artists in the Roman school.<sup>9</sup> As ecclesiastical princes, however, popes seem to have adopted the medium much earlier than the dominant narrative would lead one to believe, and their commissions played a significant role in the development of the genre. The design for the first papal medal may have even coincided with the creation of Pisanello's medal of Emperor Palaeologus.<sup>10</sup>

The oldest extant papal medal is Andrea Guacialoti's medal of Pope Nicholas V, which was cast in 1455 (fig. 4).<sup>11</sup> Medals continued to be produced by every pope for the rest of the Quattrocento and well into the Cinquecento, with the lone exception of Pius III, who died only

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen Scher, "An Introduction to the Renaissance Portrait Medal," in *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, ed. Stephen Scher, (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), 1-2.

<sup>8</sup> George Francis Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini, Volume I* (London: British Museum, 1930, reprinted, Florence: SPES, 1984), cats. 737-44.

<sup>9</sup> The Roman School is usually addressed after the study of prominent artists such as Pisanello and Matteo de' Pasti as well as after the study of Northern Italian schools of medalists. This treatment is found in the most prominent surveys including Hill's *Corpus*, Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard's *Renaissance Medals*, and in *The Currency of Fame*.

<sup>10</sup> Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, XXVII. Scher, *Currency*, 44-45. Hill mentions a number of Pisanello's medals that may have existed and are now lost, including one of Pope Martin V (reigned 1417-31). Although the evidence for this is speculative, it points to the notion that popes were portrayed in portrait medals from the inception of the genre. Hill, 13.

<sup>11</sup> Nathan Whitman, "The First Papal Medal: Sources and Meaning," *The Burlington Magazine* 133, no. 1065 (1991): 820-24. Hill, cat. 740.

four weeks after his election.<sup>12</sup> As the leaders of Western Christianity and rulers of the Papal States, popes were quick to exploit this new genre. They did so in order to articulate and assert their secular and spiritual authority within the competitive political environment of Renaissance Italy.

Julius took full advantage of the rapidly developing format. He was the first pontiff to have medals struck rather than cast, and he relied on portrait medals more than any pontiff before him. To put this in perspective, he commissioned more medals than had all previous popes combined, excluding Paul II.<sup>13</sup> Julius also introduced new subject matter to the genre, specifically in the realm of religious imagery and inscriptions, and he used his large medallic corpus to influence how he was perceived in the high-status social circle through which medals were distributed.

Julius employed some of the most inventive and highly skilled medalists of his era. Gian Cristoforo Romano, Caradosso Foppa, Vettor Gambello, and Pier Maria Serbaldi da Pescia all created medals for the pontiff. Gian Cristoforo Romano was trained in Rome but worked in Mantua and Urbino before Julius called him back to his native city in 1505.<sup>14</sup> A courtier and sculptor as well as a medalist, he had strong humanist and antiquarian interests. He also worked for Isabella d'Este and famously was with Michelangelo when the Laocoön was pulled from the Roman soil in 1506 (fig. 5).<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> J.N.D. Kelly, *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 254-55.

<sup>13</sup> For an overview of Pope Paul II's medals see Hill, cats. 737-39, 759-87. Roberto Weiss, "The Medals of Pope Julius II (1503-1513)," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 169. Roberto Weiss, *Un umanista veneziano, papa Paolo II* (Venezia: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1958), 75-78.

<sup>14</sup> Andrea S. Norris, "Gian Cristoforo Romano: The Courtier as Medalist," *Studies in the History of Art* 21 (1987): 131-36.

<sup>15</sup> Hill, cat. 221. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 136-37, cat. 118. Timothy Potts, "Gian Cristoforo Romano's bust of Isabella d'Este," *Apollo* 161 (2005): 41. Chiara Pidotella, "Gian Cristoforo Romano e Laocoonte," in *Il Laocoonte*

Unlike Gian Cristoforo, the other three medalists were not Romans. Caradosso did not come to Rome until 1505. He was Milanese and spent the early part of his career at the Sforza court with artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Donato Bramante.<sup>16</sup> In addition to casting medals, he also crafted a papal tiara for Julius.<sup>17</sup> Vettor di Antonio Gambello, known as Camelio, was Venetian and worked intermittently between Rome and Venice throughout his career.<sup>18</sup> He is credited with pioneering screw press technology in order to strike coinage that was larger and more detailed than what was previously available.<sup>19</sup> Serbaldi was a gem engraver as well as a medalist. Originally from Tuscany, he worked in Rome from the end of the Quattrocento and through the first two decades of the Cinquecento.<sup>20</sup> Serbaldi created more medals for Julius than any other artist.<sup>21</sup>

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*dei Musei Vaticani: 500 anni dalla scoperta*, ed. Giorgio Bejor (Milano: Cisalpino, 2007), 179-81.

<sup>16</sup>Marco Collareta. "Caradosso," in *Oxford Art Online*, accessed December 11, 2009, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T013927>.

<sup>17</sup> Loren Partridge, *The Art of Renaissance Rome, 1400-1600* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), 12-13. Clifford Brown and Sally Hickson, "Caradosso Foppa (ca. 1452-1526/27)," *Arte Lombarda* (1997): 10.

<sup>18</sup> Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 187-88.

<sup>19</sup> Hill, 115-18. Alan Stahl, "Mint and Medal in the Renaissance" in *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, ed. Stephen Scher (New York, Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), 137-40.

<sup>20</sup> Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 293-95. Laurie Fusco and Gino Corti, "Giovanni Ciampolini, a Renaissance Dealer in Rome and his Collection of Antiquities," *Xenia* 21, (1991): 10. "Serbaldi da Pescia, Pier Maria," in *Oxford Art Online*, accessed December 11, 2009, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T077652>.

<sup>21</sup> All of Serbaldi's medals were struck rather than cast. Hill, cats. 224-29, 866-70.



## Pope Julius II: Biographical Overview

Pope Julius II was born in 1445 and reigned from 1503-13.<sup>22</sup> Originally Giuliano Della Rovere, he was the nephew of Pope Sixtus IV, who, born Francesco Della Rovere in 1414, was pontiff from 1471-84.<sup>23</sup> Francesco came from a merchant family in the Ligurian city of Savona, joined the Franciscan order as a young boy, and was the first member of the Della Rovere clan to rise to political or ecclesiastical prominence.<sup>24</sup>

Little is known of Francesco's early life, and much of the information we have comes from the highly encomiastic biography written by Bartolomeo Platina in the 1470s.<sup>25</sup> Francesco had a successful monastic career, ascending the hierarchy of the Franciscan establishment, and attaining the highest rank in the order, minister general, in 1464.<sup>26</sup> The author of three theological treatises, he was respected for his piety as well as for his intellect. These characteristics aided in his election in 1471, which occurred only four years after he received his cardinal's hat.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 9-11. Ludwig Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), trans., Frederick Antrobus (London: Butler and Tanner, 1923), 185-607.

<sup>23</sup> Ludwig Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Vol. IV (Paul II-Sixtus IV), trans. Frederick Antrobus (London: Butler and Tanner, 1923), 197-471.

<sup>24</sup> In an attempt to ennoble his family name, Sixtus falsely claimed relation to the noble family of the Della Rovere counts of Vinovo which was from near Turin. Ian Verstegen, Introduction to *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Ian Verstegen (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2007), xiv-xv. Jill Blondin, "Pope Sixtus IV at Assisi: The Promotion of Papal Power," in *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Ian Verstegen (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2007), 19-20.

<sup>25</sup> Platina's *Life of Sixtus IV* seems to have been accepted as truth in the fifteenth century. Egmont Lee, *Sixtus IV and Men of Letters* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1978), 11-13.

<sup>26</sup> Blondin, 19-21.

<sup>27</sup> Pope Paul II made Francesco a cardinal in 1467, probably in part because of their close mutual ties to the influential Cardinal Johannes Bessarion. Lee, 19-25.

Before becoming pope, Francesco Della Rovere was by no means an active or influential patron of the arts. After his election, however, Sixtus made an about-face, commissioning more art and architecture than any other pontiff in the Quattrocento.<sup>28</sup> This may have been the doing of the numerous *nipoti* who greatly influenced the pope.<sup>29</sup> During his fourteen-year papacy Sixtus elevated six of his nephews to the rank of cardinal, including the powerful Raffaele Riario and Giuliano Della Rovere.<sup>30</sup>

Only four months after Sixtus's election, the twenty-six-year-old Giuliano joined the College of Cardinals. It was as a high-ranking cleric that he spent virtually all of his adult life. He remained a cardinal for over three decades before his election in the conclave of 1503.<sup>31</sup> As a *nipote* he served a number of key roles in his uncle's administration. Giuliano spent his time brokering alliances with other Italian and European powers, and he even led troops into battle; interests he did not relinquish once he became pope.<sup>32</sup> He enjoyed the privileges and powers of the cardinalate, commissioning castles, palaces, altarpieces, and more.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Blondin, 21.

<sup>29</sup> Sixtus's most important commissions include the building of the Sistine chapel as well as numerous urban renewal projects, one of which was the Ponte Sisto. These helped revitalize Rome's decaying infrastructure. John Shearman, "The Chapel of Sixtus IV," in *The Sistine Chapel: The Art, the History, and the Restoration*, ed. Massimo Giacometti (New York: Harmony Books, 1986), 25. For more on Rome during the reign of Sixtus IV see Meredith Gill, "The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," in *Artistic Centers of the Italian Renaissance: Rome*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 79-93.

<sup>30</sup> On Sixtus's notorious nepotism see Lee, 37-40 and Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. IV (Paul II-Sixtus IV), 231-40. See also Christine Shaw, "A Pope and His Nipote: Sixtus IV and Giuliano Della Rovere," in *L'Età dei Della Rovere: Parte Prima* (Savona: Società Savonese di Storia Patria, 1988), 233-50.

<sup>31</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 9-11.

<sup>32</sup> More details on the pope's personal life are available in any number of biographies. A full book has even been devoted to Julius's daughter, Felice. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 15-40. Guillemette de Beauville, *Jules II: Sauveur de la Papauté* (Paris: Tolra, 1965), passim. Caroline Murphy, *The Pope's Daughter: The Extraordinary Life of Felice Della Rovere* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), passim.

<sup>33</sup> Christine Shaw, "The Motivation for the Patronage of Pope Julius II," in *Prince and Princely Culture: 1450-1650*, Volume Two, ed. Martin Gosman (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 43-48.

Giuliano continued to wield significant power and influence during the papacy of Sixtus's successor. Pope Innocent VIII Cibo was also Ligurian and Giuliano helped to orchestrate his election.<sup>34</sup> Pope Alexander VI Borgia succeeded Innocent in 1492. The Spaniard was Giuliano's bitter rival, and in 1493 Alexander's forces attempted to ambush and capture the cardinal. The failed attack prompted Giuliano to flee Rome, and he spent much of the final decade of the Quattrocento away from the Eternal City. During this period he plotted with the French crown and numerous cardinals to depose Alexander, but he never succeeded in ousting his foe.<sup>35</sup> The Borgia pope died in 1503 and his successor, Pope Pius III Piccolomini, died within weeks of his election.<sup>36</sup>

Pope Julius II was elected in November 1503 and reigned for ten years. At the beginning of his pontificate the papacy's influence was on the decline and foreign powers were encroaching on Italian lands. In the words of papal historian Ludwig Pastor, when Julius took office, "the States of the Church were hardly anything more than a name."<sup>37</sup> Facing dire circumstances, the strong-willed pontiff set about reversing the fortunes of the Holy See. He helped the papacy regain control of much of Central Italy, and he carried out the renovation of St. Peter's, the Vatican, and Rome on a scale not seen since antiquity. Julius reaffirmed Rome's presence as a major player in European politics, but not without garnering considerable criticism for the numerous military conflicts into which he embroiled the Church.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Shaw, "Nipote," 238-48. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 14-26, 56-59.

<sup>35</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 88-101. Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 103-41.

<sup>36</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 196-209.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 232.

<sup>38</sup> Criticism of Julius's actions will be addressed in greater detail below. For a discussion of critics of his military policies see D.S. Chambers, *Popes, Cardinals and War: The Military Church in the Renaissance and Early Modern*

## Julius the Patron: Beyond Portrait Medals

Pope Julius II's patronage was controversial, yet it was nothing short of extraordinary. Prodigious in both scale and volume, his commissions encompassed a wide variety of media. Monumental sculptural projects and multi-room fresco cycles were carried out by the most sought after artists of the period. He also ordered enormous building complexes -- ecclesiastical, palatial, martial, and governmental -- that dot the landscape of Rome and beyond.

Through Julius's patronage the High Renaissance was brought to Rome.<sup>39</sup> His most famous commissions include the frescoes in Vatican Stanze, his tomb, the painting of the Sistine Chapel ceiling, and St. Peter's Basilica. They offer important insights into Julius's disposition towards the arts and the broader goals of his pontificate.<sup>40</sup> Despite differences in proportions and intended audiences, the pontiff's largest projects share a surprising number of characteristics with his hand-held medals.

The young Raphael, only twenty-five years old when he started working for Julius, was afforded the opportunity to fully realize his potential through a series of frescoes in the Vatican

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*Europe* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 1-3, 110-32.

<sup>39</sup> Peter Partner, *Renaissance Rome, 1500-1559: a Portrait of a Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 3-23. Marcia Hall, "The High Renaissance, 1503-34," in *Artistic Centers of the Italian Renaissance: Rome*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 107-32.

<sup>40</sup> William Wallace, *The Artist, The Man, and His Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), passim. William Wallace, *Michelangelo: Selected Scholarship in English, Volume 4: Tomb of Julius II and Other Works in Rome* (New York: Garland, 1995), passim. Christiane Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura: Meaning and Invention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1-16. Christoph Frommel, "St. Peter's: The Early History," in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture*, eds. Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), 399-423. Importantly, a great number of documents have survived that deal with Julius's high profile commissions, such as contracts and correspondence involving the works of art. The documents reveal how many of the commissions were executed, who was involved in carrying them out, and what resources were invested in the undertakings. John Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources (1483-1602)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 122-75.

Stanze.<sup>41</sup> The complex arrangements of figures and interlocking themes in his paintings represent a quantum leap over the paintings in the Borgia Apartments. Pinturicchio had been charged with decorating the rooms for Pope Alexander VI, which were located directly below Julius's suite in the Vatican Palace (fig. 6). Full of magnificent details and elegant in their own right, the figures appear rigid and formulaic in comparison to those painted by Raphael. The new dynamism exhibited in Raphael's frescoes makes Pinturicchio's work appear old-fashioned despite the fact that it was completed only a decade earlier.<sup>42</sup>

Over the latter half of Julius's pontificate the artist from Urbino helped to visually articulate an argument for Petrine exceptionalism, and he did so in a style that set a new standard for elegance and grandeur.<sup>43</sup> The most famous room that Raphael painted was the Stanza della Segnatura (figs. 7-8). It served as Julius's library, and the subject matter was chosen in accordance with its function.<sup>44</sup> Each wall illustrates one of the four primary subjects from the period. Theology (*the Disputa*), Philosophy (*the School of Athens*), Law (*Justice*), and Poetry (*Parnassus*) are depicted as gatherings of the greatest practitioners of each discipline (figs. 9-12).<sup>45</sup> The subject matter appears to transcend time and place while presenting Julius as an unrivaled patron of the arts. It lent him an air of erudition, countering that of his often brutish

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<sup>41</sup> Hugo Chapman et al, *Raphael: From Urbino to Rome* (London: National Gallery Co., 2004), 15-51. Luisa Becherucci, "Per la formazione di Raffaello," in *Studi su Raffaello*, eds. Micaela Sambucco Hamoud and Maria Letizia Strocchi (Urbino: QuattroVenti, 1987), 345-49.

<sup>42</sup> Partridge, 145-48. Gill, 96-98. Thomas Dandeleit, *Spanish Rome: 1500-1700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 21-25.

<sup>43</sup> Ingrid Rowland, "The Vatican Stanze," in *The Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 95-96.

<sup>44</sup> Joost-Gaugier, *Stanza*, 9-16.

<sup>45</sup> Rowland, "Vatican Stanze," 95-111.

behavior and bellicose policies.<sup>46</sup> Raphael's paintings blended ecclesiastical and classical subject matter; in so doing they elevated Christian virtue to the heroic levels of antiquity while sanctifying the greatest works of pagan culture.<sup>47</sup>

After completing the Stanza della Segnatura in 1511, Raphael continued working next door in the Stanza di Eliodoro (figs. 13-14). The two rooms were painted in similar styles, but the pictorial content of the second room more closely mirrored the propaganda perpetuated in Julius's medals than did the frescoes in his library. *The Liberation of St. Peter* illustrated the divine protection afforded to the first pontiff, and by extension the office of the pope (fig. 15). The scene also alluded to Julius's personal history. As a cardinal his titular church was San Pietro in Vincoli, and the relic of St. Peter's chains are clearly visible in the painting.<sup>48</sup>

*The Expulsion of Heliodorus* further emphasized the theme of divine protection (fig. 16). The fresco, which will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter 2, offered a reminder of how God protected the Temple of Solomon. It was thus implied that the Lord would defend the Church from similar foreign threats.<sup>49</sup> Another miracle was depicted in *the Mass of Bolsena* (fig. 17). Julius kneels before an altar and watches Christ's blood drip from the Eucharist. He was

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<sup>46</sup> Julius was known for his colorful language. After Venice and the papacy had reconciled their political differences in 1512, the pope referred to their past conflicts by stating that "St. Mark had grabbed St. Peter's testicles and St. Peter had been shaken; but now they were reconciled." Shaw, "Patronage," 49. *Che'l Papa rasonando disse che San Piero e San Marco erano sta' amichi, ma che San Marcho de' de sgrinfe a li coioni di San Piero e San Piero non stè saldo, ma hora è fati una cossa medema*, from Marino Sanuto, *Diarrii*, ed. Fulin et al, vol. XIV, col. 401, as quoted by Shaw.

<sup>47</sup> Timothy Verdon, "Pagans in the Church: The *School of Athens* in Religious Context," in *Raphael's "School of Athens"*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 122-26. Leopold Ettliger and Helen Ettliger, *Raphael* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1987), 76. Chapman et al, 51, 280-92. Raphael worked extensively for Julius. The *Sistine Madonna* and the portrait of *Pope Julius II* are perhaps his two most famous works aside from the Vatican Stanze. Sylvie Béguin and Cristiana Garofalo, *Raffaello: catalogo completo dei dipinti* (Santarcangelo di Romagna: Octavo, 2002), 149.

<sup>48</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 11. Carol M. Richardson, *Reclaiming Rome: Cardinals in the Fifteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 167.

<sup>49</sup> Rowland, "Vatican Stanze," 112.

conveniently rendered as a pious figure, yet the Swiss Guard remains in view. Even in the holy setting the soldiers clutch their swords and remind viewers of Julius's temporal power.

The pontiff also provided Michelangelo with two of his most famous undertakings; one in marble and the other in paint. In 1505 Julius called the artist to Rome shortly after he had sculpted the *David* in Florence.<sup>50</sup> Only thirty years old and with most of his professional life ahead of him, Michelangelo was commissioned to build the pope's tomb (fig. 18).<sup>51</sup> Intended for St. Peter's Basilica, it was to include more than forty large-scale marble statues as well as numerous bronze bas-reliefs.<sup>52</sup> The ponderous sepulcher required 34,000 kg of marble, which was transported from Carrara to Rome in November 1505.<sup>53</sup>

Most tombs from the period abutted a wall, but Michelangelo's project was supposed to be free-standing with an interior burial chamber that could be entered via a passageway.<sup>54</sup> Diverging from Renaissance convention, as Julius was known to do, the intentionally ostentatious structure was reminiscent of antique funerary monuments such as the Mausoleum of Augustus.<sup>55</sup> Impeded in part by the impossibly ambitious nature of the plan, the project was not

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<sup>50</sup> John Symonds, *The Life of Michelangelo* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 86-97. Michael Hirst, *Michelangelo: The Achievement of Fame, 1475-1534* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 42-52.

<sup>51</sup> Symonds, 4-5, 124-31. Hirst, 61-63. Ascanio Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, trans. Alice Sedwick Wohl, ed. Hellmut Wohl (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 29-35. For an analysis of early designs for Julius's tomb see Erwin Panofsky, "The First Two Projects of Michelangelo's Tomb of Julius II," in *Michelangelo: Selected Scholarship in English, Volume 4*, ed. William Wallace (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1995), 1-30.

<sup>52</sup> Condivi, 33-34. Symonds, 131-35.

<sup>53</sup> Hirst, 64.

<sup>54</sup> Claudia Echinger-Maurach, *Michelangelos Grabmal für Papst Julius II* (München: Hirmer Verlag, 2009), 9-20. Johannes Wilde, "The Tomb of Julius II," in *Michelangelo: Six Lectures* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 85-113.

<sup>55</sup> Filippo Coarelli, *Rome and environs: an archaeological guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 302-05. Alfred Frazer, "A Numismatic Source for Michelangelo's First Design for the Tomb of Julius II," *Art Bulletin* 57, no. 1 (1975): 53-57.

completed until decades after the pope's death, and even then it was only in a diminished form and inferior location.<sup>56</sup>

Julius forced the artist to temporarily abandon the tomb in 1508 so that he could paint the Sistine Chapel ceiling (fig. 19). The new project was large but manageable, thus enabling Michelangelo to make a more immediate impact than was possible with the funerary monument. It was no accident that the pope chose to commission additional decoration for what was a symbolically potent location that had been built by and named for Julius's uncle. By ordering further adornment of the space, the pontiff highlighted his prestigious lineage while forever linking himself to the hallowed site where papal elections were held.<sup>57</sup>

The iconographic scheme that had been carried out under Sixtus emphasized Petrine authority. Scenes of the life of Christ dominated the northern wall, while the southern wall featured narratives from the life of Moses, the lawgiver.<sup>58</sup> Historical portraits of popes comprised the upper register, thereby illustrating the long and distinguished chain of papal predecessors (fig. 20). The artistic program clearly delineated the theological basis for the Church's authority.<sup>59</sup>

From 1508-12 Michelangelo designed and executed a complex series of frescoes that encompass the upper portions of the walls and the entire ceiling.<sup>60</sup> The large, central spaces featured Biblical scenes, beginning with the Creation and ending just after the Flood (fig. 21).

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<sup>56</sup> The tomb was finally completed in 1545. It is located in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli, Julius's titular church from his days as a cardinal. Wilde, 110-13. Symonds, 128-44. Hirst, 199-208.

<sup>57</sup> Creighton Gilbert, *Michelangelo: On and Off the Sistine Ceiling* (New York: George Braziller, 1994), 31-36.

<sup>58</sup> Carol Lewine, *The Sistine Chapel Walls and the Roman Liturgy* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 2-9.

<sup>59</sup> Shearman, "Chapel of Sixtus IV," 22-27, 47-87.

<sup>60</sup> Sven Sandström, "The Sistine Chapel Ceiling," in *Michelangelo: Selected Scholarship in English*, Volume 2: *The Sistine Chapel*, ed. William Wallace (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), 112-17.



Couched within a fictive architectural framework each narrative was surrounded by *ignudi*. The classically-inspired nude figures hold oak leaves and sacks of acorns (fig. 22), clear references to the patron's family *stemma* (fig. 23).<sup>61</sup> Magnificent renderings of sibyls, biblical prophets, and Christ's ancestors decorate the outer-curved of the vault.

With the painting of the Sistine Chapel ceiling the pope gave Michelangelo an incredible opportunity to showcase his skills and ingenuity. The result was undeniably amazing and remains one of the great masterpieces of Western art. That Julius allowed an inexperienced fresco painter the chance to prove himself at such an important site reflects his boldness and intuition. His willingness to take risks in order to achieve greatness, as he did on more than one occasion, sets him apart from other patrons.

Julius had the good fortune to encounter Michelangelo and Raphael as each artist began his rise to prominence. The pope had the benefit of securing Bramante's services, perhaps the most famous architect of the era, at the peak of his career. Highly regarded in the sixteenth century, Vasari stated that Bramante had "mastery not of theory only, but of supreme skill and practice."<sup>62</sup>

The Belvedere and St. Peter's Basilica, both of which were commemorated by portrait medals, were among the most spectacular buildings that Bramante designed.<sup>63</sup> Measuring more than 300 meters in length, the *Cortile del Belvedere* dwarfed all other palaces in Rome (fig.

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<sup>61</sup> Christiane Joost-Gaugier, "Michelangelo's Ignudi, and the Sistine Ceiling as a Symbol of Law and Justice," *Artibus et Historiae* 17, no. 34 (1996): 21-23.

<sup>62</sup> *Ingegno e scienza in quella arte non solamente teorico, ma pratico ed esercitato sommamente*. Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de' Più Eccellenti Architettori, Pittori, et Scultori Italiani, da Cimabue Insino a' Tempi Nostri*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, Vol. IV (Firenze: G.C. Sansoni, 1879), 145. Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters Sculptors and Architects*, Vol. IV, trans. Gaston du Vere (London: Philip Lee Warner, 1913), 137.

<sup>63</sup> James Ackerman, *The Cortile del Beveledere* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1964), passim. Hill, cats. 659, 660, 876.

24).<sup>64</sup> The structure's tremendous proportions asserted the pontiff's unequaled status in the city, while the porticos and terraced gardens provided an elegant setting for his enviable collection of classical sculpture.<sup>65</sup>

Bramante's role in St. Peter's is less clear because several architects contributed to the project. He certainly had a hand in the early phases of the design, and the residue of his work was incorporated into the final product.<sup>66</sup> Bramante undoubtedly served as the pope's primary partner in the controversial venture of tearing down Old St. Peter's and replacing it with a classically inspired structure (fig. 25). The church will be discussed in greater detail when dealing with Caradosso's medal (fig. 1).

The scale, breadth, and quality of Julius's patronage were unprecedented. His commissions made an immeasurable impact on contemporaries and subsequent generations of rulers and artists. With his vision of the papacy coupled with the significant resources at his disposal, Julius gave the greatest painter, sculptor, and architect of his age the platforms from which each could realize his full potential.

It is highly unlikely that the pope devised the complex plans for the works of art and architecture himself, as he did not have the time nor necessary skills to do so. Julius had studied law at the Franciscan friary in Perugia, but he was not well versed in Latin and he could not read

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<sup>64</sup> Christoph Frommel, *Architettura alla Corte Papale nel Rinascimento* (Milano: Electa, 2003), 91-92. Christoph Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2007), 102-05.

<sup>65</sup> Kathleen Wren Christian, *Empire Without End: Antiquities Collections in Renaissance Rome, c. 1350-1527* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 160-67, 265-66.

<sup>66</sup> Frommel, "St. Peter's," 399-423, 402-08. Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 105. Christof Theones, "Renaissance St. Peter's," in *St. Peter's in the Vatican*, ed. William Tronzo (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 64-92.

Greek.<sup>67</sup> In his biography of Michelangelo, Ascanio Condivi told the story of Julius discussing a bronze statue of the pope destined for the façade of the church of San Petronio in Bologna.

When Michelangelo asked if the pope should be depicted holding a book, Julius told the artist to show him with “a sword: because I for my part know nothing of letters.”<sup>68</sup> Although the tale may be apocryphal, it certainly reflects how Julius spent his papacy, as he was either threatening combat or engaged in war for most of his ten-year reign.

Humanists such as Edigio da Viterbo, the Augustinian preacher, and Tommaso Inghirami, the Vatican Librarian, probably devised schemes for the frescoes.<sup>69</sup> They may have also composed the inscriptions and suggested images for Julius’s medals.<sup>70</sup> This is not to say that the pope was uninterested in the art he was commissioning. Condivi claimed that Julius would ascend the scaffolding in the Sistine chapel to inspect Michelangelo’s progress, but he was more concerned with the general impression made by projects rather than the details.<sup>71</sup>

It would be incorrect to assume that all of Julius’s commissions were executed in a perfectly systematic manner. A variety of restrictions, functions, audiences, and goals accompanied the projects, which were carried out by several different artists over the course of a decade. Inconsistencies were bound to arise in these circumstances, yet many of the pontiff’s commissions, including his medals, share common themes and characteristics.

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<sup>67</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 10. Joost-Gaugier, *Stanza*, 13-17. Suzanne Butters and Pier Nicola Pagliara, “The Palazzo dei Tribunali and Via Giulia in Rome,” *Zodiac* 14 (1995): 14-15.

<sup>68</sup> Condivi, 38.

<sup>69</sup> John O’Malley, *Praise and Blame*, 27.

<sup>70</sup> Both Joost-Gaugier and Rowland have proposed that Inghirami was the primary inventor of the program in the Stanza della Segnatura. Joost-Gaugier, *Stanza*, 17-20. Ingrid Rowland, “The Intellectual Background of the School of Athens,” in *Raphael’s School of Athens*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 139.

<sup>71</sup> Condivi, 57. Shaw, “Patronage,” 60-61.

A consistent interest in emulating the art of antiquity can be detected throughout Julius's patronage. The poses and musculature of the *ignudi* on the Sistine ceiling (figs. 19 and 22) evoke ancient sculptures such as the *Belvedere Torso* (fig. 26), and a comparison to the Pantheon (fig. 27) was implied in Bramante's massive dome that was to cap St. Peter's basilica (fig. 1). The format of the portrait medal, upon which the pontiff so frequently relied, was explicitly classicizing, as were the forms of the figures rendered on his medals.<sup>72</sup> So many of Julius's commissions conjured ancient Roman precedents, and in doing so, implied an imperial lineage for the man who ruled the Eternal City.<sup>73</sup>

Another common characteristic of these artworks was that they were intended to transcend previous exemplars. By surpassing earlier models they could impress and inspire awe in viewers. The non-medallic commissions often did so by way of scale, as in the plan for the pontiff's enormous tomb (fig. 18).<sup>74</sup> The quantity of medals in Julius's corpus was at the time unmatched, but as an inherently diminutive medium, the objects were of course restricted in terms of size.<sup>75</sup> They instead broke boundaries through the inventiveness of their content. Several numismatic milestones were reached in the pope's medals, including the first depiction of a constellation, the first images of shepherds, and the first portrait of a bearded pontiff. The artists also experimented with new forms of lettering as well as unique combinations of linguistic

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<sup>72</sup> These are some of the most classicizing figures on the pope's medals. Hill, cats. 228, 229, 877.

<sup>73</sup> Julius also had an impressive collection of antiquities that included the Laocoön, Belvedere Torso, and Apollo Belvedere, among other prized sculptures. Christian, 157-70.

<sup>74</sup> The tendency to commission colossal works of art was a new trend that began around 1500 and Julius was an influential proponent of the practice. Gilbert, 227-49.

<sup>75</sup> A discussion of the size of Julius's medallic corpus in comparison to those of other Renaissance patrons can be found in the introduction.

and pictorial content. All of these innovations were significant in a medium valued for novelty and cleverness.<sup>76</sup>

### **Chronology and Attribution**

Before undertaking further analysis, the chronology and attribution of Julius's corpus must be established. While I am interested in determining authorship, I am more concerned with the date and circumstances that prompted the creation of each work of art, as this knowledge will yield greater insight into Julius's motives as a patron. Despite the fact that crucial pieces of information about the medals are missing, the objects survive as indices of papal ideology from a pivotal period in Renaissance culture, and much can be learned from the commissions.

Art historians must do more than simply assign names to works of art. Instead they should attempt to clarify why objects appear as they do, and why they were created in the first place.<sup>77</sup> In the case of the Julius's medals, no single reason can explain their appearance, as they were the result of complex cultural and political circumstances. Establishing the medals' dates and viewing them within the context of Julius's pontificate is one of the first steps to unraveling their intended meanings, and it should lead to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of Julius's goals as a patron.

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<sup>76</sup> The first shepherds were featured on Hill, cats. 228, 229, 661. The first portrait of a bearded pontiff was Hill, cat. 867. One of Gian Cristoforo's medals had the first constellation, and it also feature lettering that had never before been used on medals. Hill, cat. 873.

<sup>77</sup> Hans Belting, "An Image and Its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34 (1980-1981): 1. Bal and Bryson cogently point out that "authorship is not given but produced." Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, "Semiotics and Art History," *Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (1991): 180-82.

## Medals of Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere

Prior to becoming pope, Giuliano Della Rovere commissioned three portrait medals of himself. He did not begin to do so, however, until twelve years into his cardinalate, which began in 1471. Upon receiving the bishopric of Ostia in 1483, Giuliano ordered the construction of a fortress to protect the mouth of the Tiber, and, along with it, a medal commemorating the foundation of the structure.<sup>78</sup> Cast by an unknown Roman artist, the medal depicted Giuliano in profile on the obverse and a view of the fortress on the reverse (fig. 28). The cardinal also commissioned a medal from the same artist with an image of Sixtus IV on the obverse and a similar view of the fortress on the reverse (fig. 29).<sup>79</sup>

These medals were clearly intended to function as a pair, since the reverse images are nearly identical and the inscription on Sixtus's medal mentions Giuliano by name.<sup>80</sup> Additionally, the portrait of Sixtus faces right while that of Giuliano faces left, thus, when the medals are placed side by side, the images appear to address one another. As the senior prelate Sixtus was appropriately accorded the place of honor on the heraldic dexter, and Giuliano on the lesser heraldic sinister.<sup>81</sup> At 39 mm Sixtus's medal has a slightly wider diameter than the 34 mm of Giuliano's. The difference in size reinforced the hierarchy between the two men. Yet simply placing Giuliano alongside the pontiff, even in a slightly inferior position, elevated the cardinal's status and highlighted his privileged position in relation to the head of the Church. The medals

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<sup>78</sup> Weiss, *The Medals of Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484)* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1961), 23-24 and 31-32.

<sup>79</sup> Hill, cats. 816ter and 817.

<sup>80</sup> The inscription on the reverse of Sixtus's medal reads IVL CARD NEPOS "Julius Cardinal Nephew."

<sup>81</sup> James Hall, *The Sinister Side: How Left-Right Symbolism Shaped Western Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), passim, esp. 25-38.

date to between February 1483, when Giuliano received the bishopric, and November of the same year, when he and his uncle went to Ostia for the laying of the fortress's foundation.<sup>82</sup>

Giuliano commissioned his next medal not in Rome, but in Bologna, which was another of his many bishoprics. A signed work by Sperandio of Mantua shows the cardinal in profile wearing a skull cap and hooded cape on the obverse, and a complex allegorical scene on the reverse (fig. 30).<sup>83</sup> Ripe with political overtones, the image features a gagged woman holding an arrow in one hand while her other hand covers the eyes of what appears to be a lynx. She is seated in a two-masted ship with a pelican in her piety on the bow and a cock on the tiller. Although the iconography has not been completely deciphered, the meaning of some of the individual elements is understood. The pelican in her piety was a symbol of Christ, the cock stood for St. Peter, and the ship represented the Church.<sup>84</sup> A blindfolded lynx was a symbol of statecraft, and the gagged woman may have represented Bologna.

The medal seems to have been a proclamation of the rights of the Holy See over Bologna. The city was part of the Papal States, although for much of the late Quattrocento it was controlled by the Bentivoglio family rather than the papacy. The iconography appears to pit the Bentivoglio as tyrannical rulers who hold the city captive. This interpretation is supported by the inscription on the obverse that includes the phrase *LIBERTAS ECCLESIASTICA*, a reference to the direct rule of a city by the Church.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 48-49. Weiss, "Julius," 163.

<sup>83</sup> Hill, cat. 395. Christopher Lloyd, "Reconsidering Sperandio," *Studies in the History of Art* 21, (1987): 99-105.

<sup>84</sup> Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art: Volume 2*, trans. Janet Seligman (Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society Ltd., 1972), 59-60, 136-37.

<sup>85</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 164-66.

The exact date of the medal is unknown, but it was probably cast c. 1488.<sup>86</sup> Sperandio was the most prolific medalist of the Quattrocento and he lived in Bologna from 1478 until at least 1490.<sup>87</sup> The cardinal, appointed bishop of Bologna in 1483, did not take possession of the city until late 1487. He had departed Bologna by February 19, 1488, but he probably commissioned the medal during this stay of only a few months.<sup>88</sup>

Giuliano's final medal as a cardinal was also commissioned outside of Rome (fig. 31).<sup>89</sup> Cast by Giovanni Candida, it was most likely created while the cleric was in self-imposed exile during the pontificate of Alexander VI. The cardinal spent a significant period of time in Avignon, another of his bishoprics, while his adversary ruled the Eternal City.<sup>90</sup> Unlike most medals, which include a portrait on the obverse and an emblem or a narrative scene on the reverse, this work of art has two portraits. It features a right-facing profile of Giuliano on one side, and a similar depiction of Bishop Clemente Della Rovere, Giuliano's close relative, either his brother or nephew, on the other side.<sup>91</sup> Each sitter wears a rochet and each is bare-headed and tonsured.

Weiss stated that the medal completely lacked political implications, but his assertion is far from true.<sup>92</sup> Virtually every work in this courtly genre had at least some political meaning, as

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<sup>86</sup> Hill, cat. 395.

<sup>87</sup> Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 94.

<sup>88</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 164-66.

<sup>89</sup> Hill, cat. 843.

<sup>90</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 81-115. Henry Dietrich Fernandez, "Avignon to Rome: The Making of Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere as a Patron of Architecture," in *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Ian Verstegen (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2007), 63-64.

<sup>91</sup> Scher, ed., *Currency*, 125-26.

<sup>92</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 166.



was certainly the case for a politicking cardinal such as Giuliano. Scholars have proposed a date of 1494-99 because both prelates were in France during this period. Mark Wilchusky pinpointed October 1495, as that was when Giuliano returned from a military expedition with King Charles VIII of France. According to Wilchusky, the medal would have commemorated Clemente's successful caretaking of Giuliano's affairs in Avignon.<sup>93</sup> Candida's precise whereabouts in 1495 are unknown, but he had been a courtier for King Charles VIII of France earlier in the decade, so it is feasible that he was in Avignon in 1495.<sup>94</sup>

I agree with the year 1495, but propose the month of March rather than October as the moment of the medal's creation. It was then that Giuliano appointed Clemente as the lieutenant-general and governor of the Papal States in France.<sup>95</sup> At this point in their respective careers Giuliano was a senior member of the College of Cardinals with influence in numerous courts throughout Europe, while Clemente was a mere bishop. By combining their portraits, the medal would have been a testament to Giuliano's faith in Clemente, and it would have increased the political standing of the junior prelate. The inscriptions mentioned their differing titles, but all other aspects of the portraits were exactly the same, thereby presenting them essentially as equals. The political cachet of a cardinal would have been useful for a newly appointed governor attempting to control his territory. It would have benefited Giuliano as well, since he was strengthening the image of the caretaker of his dominion. Some Roman imperial coins placed the portrait of one figure on the obverse and another on the reverse to help establish

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<sup>93</sup> Scher, ed., *Currency*, 125-26. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 280. Weiss, "Julius," 166-68.

<sup>94</sup> Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 273-75.

<sup>95</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 101.

dynasties and to pass authority from one person to another, and it seems that Giuliano took the same approach with the Clemente medal.<sup>96</sup>

Before his elevation to the papacy, Giuliano commissioned three portrait medals of himself and a fourth that depicts Pope Sixtus IV. It should not come as a surprise that this was more than any other cardinal in the entire Quattrocento. Cardinal medals were actually quite rare. Some of the most prominent clerics of the fifteenth century commissioned no medals while holding this ecclesiastical office, including Nicholas V, Pius II, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, and Alexander VI.

Prior to becoming Pope Paul II, Cardinal Pietro Barbo was the patron of two medals (figs. 32-33).<sup>97</sup> Cardinal Raffaele Riario, Giuliano's rival and fellow *nipote* of Sixtus, also had two medals (figs. 34-35), as did Cardinal Bartolommeo Roverella of Ravenna (figs. 36-37).<sup>98</sup> With so few medals of cardinals it is difficult to establish any clear iconographical or epigraphical trends. Pietro Barbo and Giuliano both commissioned medals with images of architecture, while all of the medals mention the patrons' ecclesiastical rank.

The medal Giuliano commissioned of Sixtus IV was the only work of art from this group that appears to have transgressed established norms (fig. 29). The pope is rendered on the obverse and Giuliano's name, title, and fortress are on the reverse. It was unprecedented for a cardinal to order a medal of the sitting pope and include his own name on the object. This sort of

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<sup>96</sup> R.A.G. Carson, *Principal Coins of the Romans, Volume II: The Principate, 31 BC-AD 296* (London: Trustees of the British Museum), 1980, 7-27.

<sup>97</sup> Hill, cats. 737-38.

<sup>98</sup> Raffaele Riario actually had three medals, although one of them lacked a portrait and was therefore not a true portrait medal. Hill, cats. 333, 791, 804. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 36-29. For Bartolommeo Roverella's medals, see Hill, cats. 123-24.

radical commission would foreshadow Pope Julius II's patronage in the early Cinquecento. As a cardinal, and later as pontiff, his ambitions often extended beyond his actual power.

### **Early Medals of Pope Julius II**

Giuliano Della Rovere was elected pope on November 1, 1503, and he inherited a state in financial and political disarray. There was unrest within the city, while the Church had effectively lost control of many of its territories outside of Rome.<sup>99</sup> On top of this, the Roman economy was in shambles and the papal treasury had been largely depleted, leaving the papacy vulnerable to foreign powers and unable to recover its lawful possessions.<sup>100</sup> Julius spent the first few years of his pontificate cutting expenses and collecting money in order to fund his ambitious agenda, which involved military conquests and urban renewal projects.<sup>101</sup> In spite of potential impediments, the new pope began implementing his plan to renovate or completely rebuild a number of major architectural structures in the Vatican and elsewhere in Rome, and portrait medals were soon commissioned to commemorate these projects.

Surprisingly there is no evidence that Julius commissioned a medal for his coronation, as was the case with other popes, including his uncle, Sixtus IV, and his predecessor, Alexander VI.<sup>102</sup> Rather, Julius's first portrait medal as pope was by an unknown Roman medalist and it depicted Bramante's *Cortile del Belvedere* (fig. 38).<sup>103</sup> Although the precise date of the work is unknown, it cannot be earlier than 1504 since the reverse includes a depiction of a large basin

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<sup>99</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 123-24.

<sup>100</sup> Arnaldo Bruschi, *Bramante* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1977), 88-89.

<sup>101</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 138-40.

<sup>102</sup> Weiss, *Sixtus*, 15. Hill, cats. 807, 853.

<sup>103</sup> Hill, cat. 876.

from the baths of Titus that was unearthed that same year.<sup>104</sup> Weiss asserted that it can be no later than 1508 because the obverse was copied in an illuminated manuscript in either 1507 or 1508 (fig. 39).<sup>105</sup>

An early date is likely because an architectural medal typically commemorated the start of a construction project.<sup>106</sup> According to an inscription from the site, work began in the first year of Julius's pontificate.<sup>107</sup> He was elected in November 1503, therefore construction could have commenced anytime in the following twelve months. I propose that the Belvedere medal dates to c. 1504. The somewhat awkward style of the portrait lends further support to this date. As the first of Julius's papal medals, there was no canonical depiction of the pontiff from which the artist could draw. He had to invent an image, and the result seems to have been unsuccessful. The rather ponderous and doughy visage lacks the intensity of expression that was common to many of Julius's later medals.

The next work is perhaps Julius's most famous medal and it too involved the pope's building program. Shortly after construction had begun on the Belvedere, Bramante turned his attention to the renovation of St. Peter's, which eventually led to the complete reconstruction of the church.<sup>108</sup> In 1506 a medal was cast depicting a robust image of Julius in profile on the obverse wearing a cope (a cloak-like garment worn over the shoulders) and morse (a large clasp

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<sup>104</sup> Ackerman, 49 and 192.

<sup>105</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 181.

<sup>106</sup> Foundation medals were placed in a small vessel during a ceremony for the laying of the first stone. Records of these ceremonies exist for some of Julius's other medals that commemorate buildings on the reverses. For more on foundation medals see Schraven, "Out of sight," 182-193. Schraven, "Founding Rome anew," 129-35.

<sup>107</sup> Frommel, *Architettura*, 91-92.

<sup>108</sup> Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 104.

or brooch that is often decorated with gems or incised with figural ornamentation).<sup>109</sup> An image of Bramante's design for the new St. Peter's Basilica adorned the reverse (fig. 1).<sup>110</sup>

Another medal was cast at the same time with an identical reverse and an obverse depicting Julius in *camauro* (a type of cap or bonnet) and *mozzetta* (a hooded, elbow-length cape) (fig. 40).<sup>111</sup> Both obverses included the date 1506 in their respective inscriptions, and the diaries of papal advisers and masters of ceremonies, Johannes Burckhardt and Paris de' Grassi, confirmed that copies of the medals were placed in the foundations of the basilica this same year.<sup>112</sup>

While the date of these medals is quite certain, there has been some debate about the artist. Lacking definitive evidence, scholars have traditionally attributed the objects to Caradosso Foppa because of stylistic similarities to his other medals, and because of comments made by Giorgio Vasari.<sup>113</sup> Luke Syson pointed out that Vasari's discussion of the medals is quite vague. Furthermore, the sixteenth-century author was actually referring to a different medal that depicts Bramante on the obverse and a personification of architecture and St. Peter's

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<sup>109</sup> Dobrila-Donya Schimansky, "The Study of Medieval Ecclesiastical Costumes: A Bibliography and Glossary," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, New Series*, Vol. 29, No. 7 (Mar., 1971): 317. James Charles Noonan, Jr., *The Church Visible: The Ceremonial Life and Protocol of the Roman Catholic Church* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 343.

<sup>110</sup> Hill, cat. 659.

<sup>111</sup> Hill, cat. 660. Noonan, 305-08, 327-29.

<sup>112</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 169-70. As quoted by Hill, cat. 660, J. Burckardus, *Liber notarum* (Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, xxxii, 2 (1913), p. 509: "Postquam papa posuit ipsum lapidem, muratores posuerunt in quodam vase cooperto duas medaglias aureas valoris ductorum L, et XI vel plures de metallo cum facie pape in capucino, ab una parte, ab alia designation (sic) edificii, prout est in ea quam accepi," and Paris de Grassis (Muratori, *ibid.*, p. 510, n. I, correctis corrigendis): "Quidam faber argentarius... attulit XII monetas novas sive madallas latas sicut est una ostia misse communis, grossas vero sicut costa unius gladioli communis; et ab una parte erat imago pape Julii cum his litteris, videlicet: JVLIVS LIGVR SECVNDVS PONTIFEX MAXIMVS ANNO SVI PONTIFICATVS MDVI, et ab alia erat forma temple sive edificii quod volebat erigere, cum litteris his, videlicet: INSTAVRATIO BASILICE APOSTOLORVM PETRI ET PAVLI PER JVL II PONT MAX et inferius erat hoc verbum videlicet: VATICAN.

<sup>113</sup> Scher, ed., *Currency*, 112-15. Weiss, "Julius," 169-70.

Basilica on the reverse. Syson argued that Vasari attributed the medal to Bramante, and the two medals of Julius and St. Peter's should also be attributed to the architect. No contemporary documents connected Caradosso to the Roman mint, and, according to Syson, the artist could not have designed the medal without direct access to Bramante's designs.<sup>114</sup>

A few years after Syson published his argument a document came to light directly linking Caradosso to the Roman mint during the reign of Julius II.<sup>115</sup> The medalist was also recorded as living with Bramante in the Belvedere apartments in 1508, which indicates that he was in close contact with the architect and could have had access to his designs.<sup>116</sup> There are several examples of non-professional medalists producing fine work in the Renaissance, which supports the notion that Bramante could have also made medals. The St. Peter's medals, however, are so exquisite that they must be the work of an artist with significant experience working with medals, gems, and other small, detailed objects, as was the case with Caradosso.<sup>117</sup>

It is not unreasonable to suggest that Bramante provided Caradosso with the design for the reverse, but even this would not have been necessary. The image on the medals does not actually appear on any of the surviving plans for the basilica. Rather than ground plans like

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<sup>114</sup> As quoted in Scher, ed., *Currency*, 114-15, "that hearing that he [Bramante] had the wish to pull to the ground the church of St. Peter to make it anew, he made numerous designs; but among the others he made one which was most admirable, where he showed that great intelligence of which he was capable, with two bell-towers that had between them the façade, as one sees in the coins that first Julius II, then Leo X struck, made by the most excellent goldsmith Caradosso, who in the making of dies had no compare, as one also sees [in] the medal of Bramante made most beautifully by him." *...che sentendolo avere volonta di buttare in terra la chiesa di Santo Pietro per rifarla di nuovo, gli fece infiniti disegni; ma fra gli altri ne fece uno che fu molto mirabile dove egli mostro quella intelligenza che si poteva maggiore con due campanile che mettono in mezzo la facciata, come si vede nelle monete che batte poi Giulio II e Leon X, fatte da Caradosso eccellentissimo orifice che nel far cono non ebbe pari, come ancora si vede la medaglia di Bramante fatta da lui molti bella.* Vasari, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, Vol. IV, 161. Vasari, trans. Gaston du Vere, Vol. IV, 144.

<sup>115</sup> Clifford Brown and Anna Lorenzoni, "Caradosso Foppa and the Roman Mint," *Artibus et Historiae* 22, no. 43 (2001): 41-44.

<sup>116</sup> Brown and Hickson, 12.

<sup>117</sup> Ulrich Middeldorf, "On the Dilettante Sculptor," in *Collected Writings III: 1974-79* (Florence: SPES, 1981), 173-202.

those produced by Bramante (figs. 41-42), the depiction on the medals is a frontal view of the church (figs. 1 and 40).<sup>118</sup> The artist of the medals would have only needed a general idea of the basilica's design instead of direct access to ground plans, as Syson suggested. Considering all of the evidence, the medals must be assigned to Caradosso.

An additional factor that casts doubt on Bramante's authorship and supports that of Caradosso is the existence of a medal that shares the same obverse as the first St. Peter's medal (fig. 1). This work of art has a completely different reverse that is unrelated to any of Bramante's architectural projects (fig. 43).<sup>119</sup> A classicizing image of a shepherd with his flock is encircled by the inscription, "I lead the sheep that have been saved to rest using a shepherd's crook," PEDO SERVATAS OVES AD REQUIEM AGO.<sup>120</sup> The medal has the same diameter, border, and stops, as the St. Peter's medals.<sup>121</sup> The obverse inscription includes the date 1506, therefore it was presumably created by Caradosso around the same time as the two architectural medals. It is highly unlikely that Bramante was overseeing multiple large-scale building projects for the pope and simultaneously working as his exclusive medalist.

1506 was not only the year of the laying of the foundation of the new St. Peter's, but it was also the beginning of Julius's reconquest of papal territories. Throughout the Quattrocento and early Cinquecento the pope's authority in the Papal States had slowly eroded. Violent political infighting ensued and the power vacuum was filled by local barons. From the start of

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<sup>118</sup> Lex Bosman, "The Dilemma of Pope Julius II: How to Preserve the Old St. Peter's While Building a New St. Peter's," in *Aux Quatre Vents: A Festschrift for Bert W. Meijer* (Firenze: Centro Di, 2002), 39-44. Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 105-07.

<sup>119</sup> Hill, cat. 661.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. 661.

<sup>121</sup> All three medals have diameters of 57 mm, pearled borders, and small Greek-cross or plus-sign stops. Hill, cats. 659-61. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 235-36.

his pontificate Julius set about reversing this trend. He summoned troublemakers from small towns to Rome and he seized financial control from communal councils. Such tactics pacified a number of the towns within his dominion, but Perugia and Bologna, the latter of which was the largest city in the Papal States after Rome, required military action.<sup>122</sup>

Julius gathered several thousand troops for the campaign that was to wind through towns and cities from Rome all the way to Bologna. Not only did Julius accompany the soldiers, but he also forced every able-bodied cardinal, twenty-six in all, to join him for the trek.<sup>123</sup> I propose that the third medal attributed to Caradosso was commissioned to commemorate this massive expedition of Church officials (fig. 43). The iconography of a shepherd guiding his flock was a fitting metaphor for the journey. Copies of the medal could have been distributed to cardinals at consistory when the expedition was officially announced, and additional copies could have been given to allies along the way to Bologna.

Another work that can be dated with certainty is Camelio's 1506 medal of Pope Julius II (fig. 44).<sup>124</sup> The medal, which includes the date in the obverse inscription, was probably made in Venice and presented to the pope in an attempt to gain employment at the papal mint.<sup>125</sup> Salaries were lowered at the Venetian mint in 1506, which explains Camelio's motive for seeking a new employer. Weiss proposed the date 1510, since wages were again lowered at the end of the decade. He suggested that the date appearing on the work stemmed from Camelio's attempt to copy one of Caradosso's medals of the pope (fig. 1). Weiss pointed to the practice of scribes rigidly copying manuscripts, and suggested that Camelio was doing the same here; yet his medal

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<sup>122</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 146-47.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., *Warrior Pope*, 151-52.

<sup>124</sup> Hill, cat. 445.

<sup>125</sup> Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, XXX-XXXI, 187. Hill, cat. 445.



was hardly a copy. Weiss ignored major differences between the two works, including the cut of the busts, the stops, and the portrayal of the morses, not to mention the fact that the reverses depict completely different subjects. Weiss was overly clever in proposing 1510 as a possible date for Camelio's medal, and enough evidence exists to assign this work to 1506.

Since the medal was not commissioned by the pontiff or even created in the environment of the curia, the subject matter does not fully reflect Julian policy. The reverse image is a forthright expression of Petrine authority. It shows the pope kneeling before an enthroned Christ while St. Peter stands next to the Lord. The scene can be interpreted as the way in which an outsider assumed Julius wanted to be presented in a medal. Interestingly, Camelio's work features the letters "VC," the artist's initials, on the reverse. It is the only one of Julius's medals to include a signature, further differentiating it from the rest of the corpus.<sup>126</sup>

The creation of the next medal was likely prompted by Julius's triumphal entry into Bologna in November 1506, which concluded his journey en masse through the Papal States (fig. 45). A right-facing portrait of Julius in cope and morse was rendered on the obverse. The reverse features an image of the enthroned pontiff, accompanied by two cardinals wearing miters, and two figures kneeling before the pope, one of whom is a spearman.<sup>127</sup> The obverse epigraph reads, IVL II P M BONONIA A TYRANO LIBERAT, "Julius II Pontiff Maximus liberated Bologna from the tyrant." A virtually identical inscription was used on coins thrown into

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<sup>126</sup> Sperandio's medal of Giuliano includes the artist's signature, but it was created when the sitter was still a cardinal. Hill, cat. 395. There is much confusion regarding Camelio's name. Hill dubbed the artist "Vettor di Antonio Gambello (Camelio)," Weiss simply called him "Vittore Camelio," he was referred to in *The Currency of Fame* as Gambello, yet the most recent publication, Pollard's National Gallery of Art catalogue, refers to the artist as Camelio. The artist has also been confused with Giovanni Bellini's pupil Vettor Belliniano. For simplicity I will refer to him as Camelio. Weiss, *Sixtus*, 24-25.

<sup>127</sup> Hill, cat. 875.

the crowd as Julius entered the city in 1506.<sup>128</sup> Weiss noted that the portrait of Julius on the medal resembles the portrait on Bolognese coins made from dies engraved by Francesco Francia, thus he proposed that Francia may have also produced the medal (fig. 46).<sup>129</sup>

I agree with Weiss's attribution of the medal to Francia. It was certainly not based on any of the other medals created for the pontiff. The obverse inscriptions on Julius's Roman medals typically featured an extended form of his name and title, and they lacked specific references to cities and actions such as those included in the Bologna medal. Weiss suggested that Francia's medal may have commemorated Alfonso I d'Este's visit to kiss the pope's foot in February 1507, although such an occasion seems much less worthy of medallic commemoration than Julius's victorious entry into Bologna. A bronze specimen of the work was also used as a foundation medal for the rebuilding of a fortress in Bologna begun this same month.<sup>130</sup>

The next medal was most likely made for Julius's triumphal return from Bologna to Rome in March, 1507. The work features an image of Julius wearing a cope and morse on the obverse along with the inscription IVLIVSCAESARPONT II, while the reverse illustrates the papal tiara and the keys of St. Peter above the Della Rovere coat of arms (fig. 47).<sup>131</sup> BENEDICT QVI VENIT IN OD "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord," is inscribed on the

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<sup>128</sup> The inscription used on two denominations of coins was BON P IVL A TIRANO LIBERAT, "Pope Julius liberates Bologna from the tyrant." The phrasing may differ from that on the medal since the coins were smaller than the medal. Joseph Coffin, *Coins of the Popes* (New York: Coward-McCann, inc., 1946), 36, 55. Francesco Muntoni, *Le monete dei papi e degli stati pontifici, Volume I* (Roma: P. and P. Santamaria, 1972), 109, cat. 87, 98.

<sup>129</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 179.

<sup>130</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 180. Luigi Frati, *Le Due Spedizioni Militari di Giulio II: Tratte dal Diario di Paride Grassi Bolognese* (Bologna: Regia Tipografia, 1886), 147-50.

<sup>131</sup> Hill, cat. 874.

reverse. The epigraph is from Psalms 117:26 and is part of the liturgy for Palm Sunday.<sup>132</sup> It was on this day in 1507 that Julius made his entry into the city, and he was greeted with ephemeral triumphal arches erected by members of the curia.<sup>133</sup>

While the date of this medal is quite secure, some peculiar elements pertaining to the inscription, iconography, and style raise questions about whether Julius was the patron. It is the only medal that explicitly refers to him as “Caesar,” and it is also the only one to include his coat of arms.<sup>134</sup> The Della Rovere oak was, however, included on numerous coins minted under Julius, and I propose that the patron of the work borrowed the symbol from papal currency since it was an easily intelligible and uncontroversial means of honoring the pontiff.<sup>135</sup>

The style of the portrait stands out as well. The pope’s features are rendered differently than they are in the medals of Caradosso, Gian Cristoforo Romano, and Pier Maria Serbaldi, all of whom Julius employed. The use of a different artist along with the unique inscription and conservative iconography suggest that the patron was not the pope, and probably not a member of his inner circle. The work could have been commissioned by a member of the curia who was unable to accompany Julius to Bologna, and perhaps one of the same people who staged the triumphal procession for the pope’s return. The Caesarian reference on the medal coincided with that on the triumphal arch erected for the parade, which included the phrase, VENI VIDI VICI,

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<sup>132</sup> Weiss, “Julius,” 179-80. Frati, *Le due spedizioni*, 179. Unless otherwise specified, all biblical quotations in English are from the Douay-Rheims Bible and all biblical quotations in Latin are from the Vulgata Clementina.

<sup>133</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 213-14.

<sup>134</sup> Shaw, “Patronage,” 44.

<sup>135</sup> Muntoni, 99-115.

“I came, I saw, I conquered,” the words of Caesar after a swift and successive military conquest.<sup>136</sup>

### **Early Medals of Gian Cristoforo Romano and Pier Maria Serbaldi**

Attributions for many of Julius’s medals are not disputed. There were a few instances, however, over which Weiss disagreed with Hill, and in all of these cases the medals concerned were either by Gian Cristoforo Romano or Pier Maria Serbaldi. Neither scholar’s conclusions are without their complications, but I side with Weiss in virtually all cases. In order to untangle this web it will be necessary to address the disputed Gian Cristoforo and Serbaldi medals as a group since some of them share either an obverse or a reverse, while others were modeled closely on one another.

Scholars agree that the first medal from this group is the product of Gian Cristoforo Romano (fig. 48).<sup>137</sup> The medal depicts a right-facing profile of Julius in *camauro* and *mozzetta* on the obverse and personifications of Peace and Fortune shaking hands on the reverse. Hill insisted that the medal commemorated a peace between Louis XII of France and Ferdinand of Aragon, which was brokered by the pope in 1504. He went on to cite payment to the artist for the dies of two medals, one of which was a medal of Peace. The document, dated September 14, 1506, stated that Gian Cristoforo was paid for crafting two medals, one of which featured Peace

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<sup>136</sup> Both Plutarch and Suetonius attributed the phrase to Julius Caesar. Suetonius wrote that it appeared on an inscription carried by Caesar’s men in a triumphal procession. Plutarch stated that it was written in a letter from Caesar to Amantius in 47 BC after he had quickly conquered Pharnaces at Zela in Asia Minor. Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Twelve Caesars*, trans. Robert Graves (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 30, I:37. Plutarch, *Caesar*, trans. Christopher Pelling (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 392, 50.3. Weiss, “Julius,” 179-80. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 286-87.

<sup>137</sup> Hill, cat. 222. Hill, Weiss, and Pollard concur that this medal is by Gian Cristoforo Romano. Weiss, “Julius,” 172-73. Graham Pollard, *Italian Renaissance Medals in the Museo Nazionale of Bargello: 1400-1530* (Firenze: SPES, 1984), 148-49.

as its subject.<sup>138</sup> The medal of Peace, however, was cast rather than struck. This led Hill to conclude that the surviving work was the model for a medal that was eventually struck.<sup>139</sup>

I agree with Weiss that Hill's explanation was unsatisfactory, but Weiss also failed to provide a specific hypothesis for the meaning and occasion of the medal. He merely stated that the work celebrated Julius's political achievements without suggesting a specific event.<sup>140</sup> The earliest mention of the medal was in a letter from Jacopo d'Atri to Isabella d'Este written on October 24, 1507.<sup>141</sup> I propose that the medal was produced in 1506-07, and that it was created to commemorate Julius's accomplishments on his campaign through the Papal States during that period. He brought peace and order to several towns and cities, quelling factional fighting, and restoring the rule of the Church. Gian Cristoforo could have designed the medal after Julius's entry into Bologna in November, 1506, or around the time of his return to Rome in March, 1507.

The reverse inscription reads, IVSTITIAE PACIS FIDEIQ RECVPERATOR, "Recoverer of Justice, Peace, and Faith." It could refer to the recovery of Perugia from the Baglioni family and Bologna from the Bentivoglio family.<sup>142</sup> Such an occasion seems much more worthy of medallic commemoration than a peace agreement between two foreign powers. If the "Julius Caesar" medal was indeed commissioned by someone other than the pope (fig. 47),

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<sup>138</sup> Regarding payment to Gian Cristoforo Romano, the document stated, "*per auer fatto lo conio de duo medaglie, per N. Signore, una della pace che se fece e l'altra della caristia.*" Weiss cited P. Giordani, "Studi sulla scultura romana del rinascimento," *L'Arte* 10 (1907): 207. Weiss, "Julius," 173. Hill, cat. 222.

<sup>139</sup> Hill, cat. 222. Pollard, *Bargello*, 148-50.

<sup>140</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 172-73.

<sup>141</sup> As quoted by Weiss, "Julius," 172-73, *Due figure et un sacrificio che ad iudicio de ogni intelligente alli boni antichi se po comparer*, from A. Venturi, "Gian Cristoforo Roman," *Archivio storica dell' arte*, I, 1888, 151, n. 2.

<sup>142</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 259-63. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 147-52. In antiquity the Latin word *fides* more commonly meant loyalty or allegiance rather than faith. The medallic inscription could have had these ancient connotations as well as Christian connotation of faith, especially considering that it was commissioned by a religious leader.

then Gian Cristoforo's work would have been the only medal commissioned by Julius upon his return to Rome.

There is another medal of Peace, this one struck, which may have been the work for which payment to Gian Cristoforo Romano was recorded in the above document (fig. 49).<sup>143</sup> The reverse of the medal shows two standing figures holding hands and wearing vaguely classicizing dress.<sup>144</sup> They have been identified as Peace and Justice, or *Aequitas*, due to the branch held by the figure on the left and the scales and cornucopia held by the figure on the right.<sup>145</sup> Below the figures is the phrase *OSCVLATE SVNT*. The inscription is from Psalms 84:11 and it alludes to the phrase, *justitia et pax osculatae sunt*, "Justice and Peace havekissed."

The obverse shows a stern-faced Julius wearing a cope and morse. Emblazoned on the cope is a full-length figure, probably a saint, and the morse features a depiction of a tiny, slumped, half-length figure, which can only be Christ as the Man of Sorrows. It is the earliest appearance of the distinctive obverse, and it served as the model for several of Julius's medals. The precise occasion for which the medal was struck is unclear. If it is the medal referred to in the record of payment, then it likely dates to between Gian Cristoforo's arrival in Rome in 1505

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<sup>143</sup> Hill, cat. 877.

<sup>144</sup> The attire is rather peculiar, especially the headdress of the figure on the left, which does not appear to be based on any ancient source.

<sup>145</sup> The branch is presumably supposed to be an olive, but several types of branches can be found on Roman coins, including laurel and palm branches. The artist was most likely consulting several different ancient sources and the branch is probably meant to be large and conspicuous on the tiny surface of the medal. As a result its specific details are somewhat ambiguous. It has the appearance of an amalgam of various branches. Furthermore, Peace shares some characteristics with Victory. While Peace usually holds an olive branch, Victory is here shown with a palm. Furthermore, Victory is typically winged, yet Gian Cristoforo's figure lacks wings. Interestingly, the branches on Julius's two medals of Peace differ in appearance, possibly because one is struck and the other cast. The forked appearance of the branch on the cast medal more closely resembles ancient numismatic depictions of olive branches. John Melville-Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins* (London: Seaby, 1990), 238-39, 319-20.

and the payment on September 14, 1506.<sup>146</sup> However, the design for the sophisticated and detailed obverse was used late in Julius's reign, and Gian Cristoforo was still casting medals around 1506, as opposed to striking them.<sup>147</sup> It would therefore not be unreasonable to assign a later date to the struck medal of Peace, perhaps from 1508-12, when the artist was striking medals and using this particular obverse design.<sup>148</sup> Regardless of the date, the medal may have been intended as a general statement of Julius's virtues. It would have portrayed him as the ideal ruler, either while he was actively intervening in the affairs of towns in the Papal States, or while he was battling foreign forces as part of his broader goal of regaining control of the Church's territories.<sup>149</sup>

The other medal mentioned in the payment record was said to portray *caristia*. Weiss took this to mean *carestia*, or the Italian for "famine." He concluded that the document described a now-lost work of art that commemorated some sort of food shortage. He even hypothesized that a nineteenth-century medal showing a female figure holding a cornucopia and ears of corn could be a late copy of the original (fig. 50).<sup>150</sup> Weiss's explanation is highly implausible, and he offered no evidence for Julius's intervention during a food shortage.

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<sup>146</sup> Norris, 136. This struck medal of Peace or a different medal may have been referred to in a document for payment to Gian Cristoforo Romano in 1506. Weiss, "Julius," 172-74.

<sup>147</sup> The Scorpion medal (fig. 70), which can be securely dated to 1511, uses an obverse based on the design of the struck medal of Peace. Hill, cat. 873.

<sup>148</sup> The end date is 1512 since this is the year Gian Cristoforo Romano died. Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, eds, *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), 510.

<sup>149</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 144-47. Charles Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 96-106.

<sup>150</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 173-75. Adolfo Modesti asserts that the famine medal is from Julius's reign, but I disagree with his conclusion. He also points out that the same reverse was used for a medal of Pope Clemente VIII, who reigned a century after Julius. The obverse of the famine medal (fig. 45) illustrated by Modesti has a flaw in it, indicating that the medal was struck after the die had seen significant usage. This type of flaw is a tell-tale sign of a mule, or a medal struck by combining two unrelated dies. Thus the medal almost certainly post-dates Julius's reign. Adolfo Modesti, *Corpus Numismatum Omnium Romanorum Pontificum Volume I* (Roma: De Cristofaro, 2002), 469-76.

The earliest medal that Pier Maria Serbaldi created for Julius was probably a work depicting the fortress at Civitavecchia (fig. 51).<sup>151</sup> The obverse includes an image of the pontiff in cope and morse and the inscription, IVLII II ARCISFVNDAT, “Julius II Founder of the Fortress.”<sup>152</sup> It can be dated to late 1508, as Paris de’ Grassi described how a pot of medals was placed in the foundation of the fortress on the second Sunday in Advent of this year.<sup>153</sup> The medal, along with a few others addressed below, had been assigned by Hill to Gian Cristoforo Romano until Weiss pointed out the similarities of the portraits to three portrait coins attributed to Serbaldi (figs. 52-54).<sup>154</sup> Weiss instead assigned these works to Serbaldi and I concur with his attributions. The medals have the same visage, and some of them share the peculiar arched cut of the bust that appears on one of the coins.

Gian Cristoforo also created a medal that was most likely placed in the foundations at Civitavecchia along with Serbaldi’s work (fig. 55).<sup>155</sup> The obverse was made from the same die or one very similar to that used for Gian Cristoforo’s struck medal of Peace that depicts Julius

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For more on mules, see John L. Varriano, “Some Documentary Evidence on the Restriking of Early Papal Medals,” *The American Numismatic Society: Museum Notes* 26, (1981): 216-19.

<sup>151</sup> Hill, cat. 224.

<sup>152</sup> Strangely Julius’s name is spelled IVLII on this medal. Unlike the other medallic inscriptions that use the nominative form of Julius’s name, here it is in the genitive, which means the inscription can be translated as “The Founding of the Fortress of Julius II.”

<sup>153</sup> Weiss, “Julius,” 176-77. As quoted by Weiss, “Julius,” 177, Paris de’ Grassi described a *vase uno plenus numismatibus novs*, “one vase full with new coins.”

<sup>154</sup> Weiss, “Julius,” 176-77. Serbaldi probably did not begin engraving dies for portrait medals and portrait coins until around 1507. He received payment for engraving coin dies on November 17, 1507. Edoardo Martinori, *Annali della Zecca di Roma (Alessandro VI-Pio III-Giulio II)* (Roma: Istituto Italiano di Numismatica, 1918), 47, 52, 54-58, 75, 77. All of Julius’s portrait coins are available in Muntoni, 99-115.

<sup>155</sup> Hill, cat. 872.



wearing the Man of Sorrows morse (fig. 49).<sup>156</sup> The reverse shows the castle at Civitavecchia from a slightly higher viewpoint than the image on Serbaldi's medal, and the inscription reads, CENTVM CELLE, the classical name of Civitavecchia. The attribution to Gian Cristoforo is supported by a record of payment to the artist in the Camera Apostolica account books from November 15, 1509, for the production of *duo medaglie delli edifice di Roma et Civitavecchia*, "two medals of buildings in Rome and Civitavecchia."<sup>157</sup> Considering that the ceremony for the laying of the foundation was in mid-December of the previous year, it is reasonable to assume that the medal was produced in late 1508 and that the artist was paid the following year.<sup>158</sup>

The reverse of the next medal (fig. 56) is clearly an imitation of the St. Peter's medals by Caradosso (figs. 1 and 40). Except for the omission of the full inscription, the reverse copied every detail of Caradosso's work, down to the pearled border and rocky ground on which the basilica sits.<sup>159</sup> I agree with Weiss's suggestion that this was the medal depicting a Roman building for which Gian Cristoforo Romano was paid in November 1509.<sup>160</sup> His explanation is plausible considering that the obverse was the same as that used on the medal of the fortress at Civitavecchia (fig. 55), for which Gian Cristoforo also received payment in November 1509.

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<sup>156</sup> The portrait must have been well received as it was used for at least five of the pope's medals. Hill, cats. 869, 871, 872, 873, 877.

<sup>157</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 175. Weiss again quoted Giordani, 207-08. Weiss insisted that the two medals referred to in the payment were the CENTVM CELLE medal and a medal of St. Peter's, the reverse of which is a virtual copy of Caradosso's St. Peter's medal. The two medals referred to in the record of payment could just as easily have been the other Civitavecchia medal and a medal of the Palace of Justice, which Hill attributed to Gian Cristoforo Romano. Considering the similarity of Serbaldi's coin portrait of Julius to Serbaldi's Civitavecchia medal, I think Weiss's attribution is correct.

<sup>158</sup> This time lag is even more understandable if the artist produced the CENTVM CELLE medal first, then created the St. Peter's medal at some point in 1509.

<sup>159</sup> Hill, cat. 871.

<sup>160</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 175.

The circumstances surrounding this medal are quite complicated. There is a second medal with a reverse made from the same die as Gian Cristoforo Romano's St. Peter's medal, yet the obverse uses a die that both Hill and Weiss attributed to Serbaldi (fig. 57).<sup>161</sup> Hill commented that the specimens he inspected of figs. 56 and 57 were probably modern creations, but he still included them in Julius's corpus.<sup>162</sup> I propose that both of the medals date to c. 1508-09 because the obverse portraits are identical to those on medals struck by Gian Cristoforo and Serbaldi during this period. To be clear, I hold that the obverse of fig. 57 was engraved by Serbaldi, while its reverse was engraved by Gian Cristoforo Romano. For further discussion of this medal and the possible scenario that two artists may have collaborated in its production, see the appendix at the end of this dissertation.

The next medal was formerly attributed to Gian Cristoforo Romano but is now given to Serbaldi (fig. 58). The change in attribution is due to the cut of the portrait bust and the physiognomy of the sitter, both of which closely resemble Serbaldi's aforementioned coins (figs. 52-54).<sup>163</sup> The reverse of the medal features an image of a fortress-like structure with arcaded windows and crenellated towers, the highest of which flies a flag. Below the building is the phrase IVRI REDD, "Returner of Justice," which has helped to identify it as Bramante's never-completed Palace of Justice, or Palazzo dei Tribunali. The building was to be located in Rome and it reflects Julius's effort to rebuild the city so as to ennoble the capital of his papal empire.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Hill, cat. 870.

<sup>162</sup> Hill, cat. 870-71.

<sup>163</sup> Weiss attributed this medal to Serbaldi while Hill ascribed it to Gian Cristoforo Romano. Weiss, "Julius," 177-78. Hill, cat. 225.

<sup>164</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 168-73. Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 108-09.

The structure, and thus the medal depicting it, dates to 1508, which is the period after Julius had returned from Bologna. By this point his building program was in full swing, with several large construction projects underway, including St. Peter's Basilica, a new choir in Santa Maria del Popolo, and multiple fortresses. Another medal was made around this time that featured the same image of the Palazzo dei Tribunali on the reverse (fig. 59) and the obverse that had been used on Serbaldi's medal for the fortress at Civitavecchia (fig. 51).<sup>165</sup> The primary difference between the two obverses is the inscription. The first epigraph, IVLIVS SECVNDVS PONTIFEX MAXI, "Julius II Pontifex Maximus," simply referred to Julius as pope. The inscription taken from the CIVITA VECHIA medal, IVLII II ARCIS FVNDAT, "Julius II Founder of the Fortress," emphasized the fortress-like nature of the Palace of Justice and Julius's role as its patron.

A third medal by Serbaldi appears to depict the Palace of Justice on the reverse, but unlike the previous medallic design, the foreground of this image includes a personification of Justice next to a seated blacksmith (fig. 60).<sup>166</sup> The hammer and anvil were the blacksmith's trademark tools, and they had connotations of strength, justice, and uprightness that date to antiquity. One of the earliest references to an anvil as a symbol of justice can be found in *The Libation Bearers*, a Greek tragedy written by Aeschylus in the fifth century BC. It includes the line, "Justice has planted her anvil firmly, and Fate has forged her keen bronze blade."<sup>167</sup> The building rendered on the medallic reverse appears to be the same as the one on the previous

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<sup>165</sup> Hill, cat. 226.

<sup>166</sup> Hill, cat. 227.

<sup>167</sup> Aeschylus, *Aeschylus: Complete Plays, Volume I*, trans. Carl R. Mueller (Hanover, NH: Smith and Kraus, Inc., 2002), 196, *The Libation Bearers*, l. 646.

medal, save for the lack of a flag on the central tower. The medal uses Serbaldi's ARCIS FVNDAT obverse, and, like the other medals for the Palace of Justice, it probably dates to 1508.

Stanislaus von Moos suggested that the Blacksmith medal may have commemorated Julius's rebuilding of a fortress at the Porta Galleria in Bologna rather than the Palace of Justice in Rome.<sup>168</sup> His hypothesis is highly unlikely, however, as the construction of the Bolognese fortress was begun on February 20, 1507, and placed in its foundation were several copies of Francesco Francia's medal of Julius discussed above (fig. 45).<sup>169</sup> The obverse used for the Blacksmith medal postdates the foundation of the fortress in Bologna by at least a year. Furthermore, the creation of multiple medal designs for the same building should not be reason to question the subject of the work, as the fortress at Civitavecchia and St. Peter's Basilica received the same treatment. The redundant designs can instead be understood as highlighting just how important the Palace of Justice was to Julius's overall political agenda.

### **Late Medals of Gian Cristoforo Romano and Pier Maria Serbaldi**

Another medal shares the same obverse with the first Palazzo dei Tribunali medal (fig. 58), but its reverse features a shepherd seated on a rock with sheep in the background. It has a bell-flower border that is unlike any other in Julius's corpus of medals (fig. 61).<sup>170</sup> The only inscription on the reverse is the word TVTELA, meaning "Protection" or "Guardianship." Another medal exists with a reverse made from the same die as the TVTELA medal, but with a

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<sup>168</sup> Stanislaus Von Moos, "The Palace as a Fortress: Rome and Bologna under Pope Julius II," in *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics*, eds. Henry Millon and Linda Nochlin (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1978), 57-62.

<sup>169</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 179-80. Frati, *Le due spedizioni*, 148-49.

<sup>170</sup> Hill, cat. 228.

different obverse (fig. 62).<sup>171</sup> The portrait on the latter obverse is strikingly similar to that used by Serbaldi on his CIVITA VECHIA medal (fig. 51). The ornamentation on the copes appear to be identical, as do the morses, both of which feature the heads of two saints, presumably Peter and Paul. Despite these similarities the inscriptions greatly differ, therefore separate dies must have been used for the two medals.

The obverses of the TVTELA medals are both by Serbaldi, which indicates that the reverses probably were too (figs. 61-62). Since the obverses, or ones very similar to them, were used on medals created in 1508, the TVTELA medals likely date to this year as well. However, lacking solid evidence, it cannot be ruled out that the medals were produced anytime between 1508 and the end of Julius's reign in 1513. Since the medals were struck, their dies were preserved and could have easily been paired with other designs in order to strike new medals long after they had been engraved. Like the Caradosso medal with a shepherd on the reverse (fig. 43), these works may have alluded to Julius's role as protector of the Papal States.<sup>172</sup>

The next medal commemorates the Basilica della Santa Casa in Loreto, the church that enshrined the house of the Virgin (fig. 63).<sup>173</sup> An image of Julius facing right in cope and morse is on the obverse, while the reverse features a depiction of the church's façade. The inscription, *TEMPLVM VIRG LAVRETI*, identifies the building as the basilica in Loreto, and the date, *MDVIII* (1509), is in the exergue, which is the area below the primary image. This space was typically separated from the rest of the scene by an exergual line. Exergues were used on coins

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid., cat. 229.

<sup>172</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 178. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 235-36, 240-45.

<sup>173</sup> Hill, cat. 868. Bruschi, *Bramante*, 118-19.

and medals from antiquity through the Renaissance, and they were featured on a number of Julius's medals.<sup>174</sup>

Construction in Loreto did not begin in the year indicated in the inscription; rather a church had been in progress since the late Quattrocento.<sup>175</sup> 1509 was the year Julius had intended to make his first pilgrimage to the site as pope, although he did not actually embark on the journey until 1510.<sup>176</sup> Significantly, the Loreto medal is the only work in Julius's corpus to depict a building outside of Rome and its general vicinity.<sup>177</sup> The medal represents the pontiff's attempt to assert the presence of the Holy See near the edges of the Papal States during a period in which its borders were in flux and territories were trading hands between various Italian and European powers.<sup>178</sup>

There is a second medal with the same Loreto reverse and an obverse that is quite similar to Gian Cristoforo's CENTVM CELLE medal, but most scholars believe this specimen is a modern production (fig. 64).<sup>179</sup> Weiss ignored the first Loreto medal and only analyzed this later work. He did not comment on its modernity and he attributed it to Gian Cristoforo Romano because the obverse resembled an earlier medal by the artist.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Melville-Jones, 110-11.

<sup>175</sup> Kathleen Weil-Garris, *The Santa Casa di Loreto: Problems in Cinquecento Sculpture*, Vol. 1 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977), 5. Colum Hourihane, ed., *The Grove Encyclopedia of Art and Architecture*, Volume 2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 141.

<sup>176</sup> Weil-Garris, 6-11.

<sup>177</sup> Julius commissioned medals for architecture in Civitavecchia, which is not part of Rome. Civitavecchia, however, is only sixty kilometers from the city, and it is closer to Rome than it is to any other major city.

<sup>178</sup> Weil-Garris, 6-11. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 173, 183, 203, 262.

<sup>179</sup> Hill, cat. 869. Pollard, *Bargello*, 148-50. This medal could be a mule produced years after Julius and the artists died. For a discussion of mules see Varriano, 216-19.

<sup>180</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 176. Weil-Garris, 6-16. Millon and Lampugnani, 510.

I agree with the assessment by Pollard and Hill that the second Loreto medal post-dates Julius's reign; however I attribute the earlier medal to Serbaldi rather than Gian Cristoforo.<sup>181</sup> Having personally examined the work of art, the unblemished patina resembles that of medals produced after the sixteenth century.<sup>182</sup> Since the reverse die survives to this day, it could have been paired with an obverse die long after Julius's reign.<sup>183</sup> Moreover, the obverse of the first Loreto medal is similar to other works by Serbaldi. Although I am not theoretically opposed to attributing the reverse to a different artist, the image of the church more closely resembles the architectural depictions of Serbaldi than those of Gian Cristoforo. Serbaldi rendered the fortress at Civitavecchia from a completely frontal view (fig. 51), much like the image of the church at Loreto, while Gian Cristoforo showed this same fortress from an elevated viewpoint (fig. 55).<sup>184</sup> Additionally, Serbaldi's images of the Palace of Justice (figs. 58-60) share the simplified and schematic style of the Loreto reverse (fig. 63).<sup>185</sup>

A different medal by Serbaldi used the same obverse as the first Loreto medal, but it was paired with a reverse that illustrated the conversion of St. Paul (fig. 65).<sup>186</sup> Beneath the scene is an epigraph adapted from the Acts of the Apostles 26:14 describing the conversion. The inscription reads, CONTRA STIMVLVM NE CALCITRES, "Do not kick against the goad," a

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<sup>181</sup> Pollard, *Bargello*, 148-50. Hill, cat. 869.

<sup>182</sup> Stephen Scher, "Connoisseurship of the Medal: A Supplement to the Exhibition Catalogue *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance*," *The Medal*, no. 23 (1993): 8-10.

<sup>183</sup> For an image of the die see Modesti, 492.

<sup>184</sup> Toderi and Vannel agree with my assessment that the first Loreto medal is by Serbaldi and dates to 1509. Giuseppe Toderi and Fiorenza Vannel, *Le Medaglie Italiane del XVI Secolo*, Volume I (Firenze: Edizioni Polistampa, 2000), 643, cat. 2013.

<sup>185</sup> Weiss pointed out that Gian Cristoforo was sent to Loreto to work on the church. The artist supervised construction at the site, which in no way indicates that he must have designed the portrait medal. Weiss, "Julius," 176. Weil-Garris, 6-16. Millon and Lampugnani, 510.

<sup>186</sup> Hill, cat. 866.

goad being an instrument used to whip a beast of burden. The full verse, however, is a narration of Paul being knocked from his horse and chastened by Jesus for persecuting Christians.<sup>187</sup>

As is the case with several of Julius's medals, the precise date and occasion for which the medal was commissioned is unknown. Since it shares an obverse with Serbaldi's Loreto medal, which was struck in 1509, the St. Paul medal presumably dates to between 1509 and Julius's death in 1513.<sup>188</sup> The papacy was still struggling with Venice, France, and Ferrara during this period, and the medal's message could have been directed against any of these powers.<sup>189</sup>

Weiss suggested that the medal could have been struck to commemorate the excommunication of Alfonso I, Duke of Ferrara. On August 9, 1510, the duke had been censured by the papacy for siding with France and against Rome in political, religious, and economic matters.<sup>190</sup> Although Weiss lacked evidence to link the medal to the specific event, his suggestion is plausible considering the likely date of the artwork. The St. Paul medal could have been struck in conjunction with the excommunication of Alfonso I, an overtly political act, or it

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<sup>187</sup> Acts 26:14, "And when we were all fallen down on the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me in the Hebrew tongue: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goad." *Omnesque nos cum decidissemus in terram, audivi vocem loquentem mihi hebraica lingua: Saule, Saule, quid me persequeris? Durum est tibi contra stimulum calcitrare.* The inscription could also refer to Acts 9:5, which is almost identical to Acts 26:14. Acts 9:5, "Who said: Who art thou, Lord? And he: I am Jesus who thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad." *Qui dixit: Quis es, Domine? Et ille: Ego sum Jesus, quem tu persequeris; durum est tibi contra stimulum calcitrare.*

<sup>188</sup> Weiss suggested that the medal may have been intended as a warning against a person or a city. He proposed that it was issued in 1506 and the message was directed at either the Baglioni or the Bentivoglio. This is quite unlikely since the obverse was used with the 1509 Loreto medal and no medals attributed to Serbaldi are dated prior to 1508. Weiss's explanation requires Serbaldi to have designed the obverse in 1506. The artist then would have needed to create a different obverse that was featured on multiple medals in 1508 (figs. 51 and 58). Finally he would have had to disregard the newer dies and resurrect the older die for use on the Loreto medal in 1509. Weiss, "Julius," 179. I would argue that Serbaldi designed the die for the Loreto medal in 1509 and used it again between this date and the end of Julius's reign. Serbaldi had been working in Rome since the pontificate of Alexander VI. There is a record of payment to him for a *bolla di piombo*, or lead seal, for Pope Pius III. Pius III was Julius's short-lived, immediate predecessor, but the payment dates to April 11, 1505. It appears, however, that Serbaldi did not begin engraving dies for portrait medals and portrait coins until much later. He received payment for engraving coin dies on November 17, 1507. Martinori, 47, 52, 54-58, 75, 77.

<sup>189</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 135-38, 179-82. Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 327-53.

<sup>190</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 179. Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 327-29.



could have been intended as a general warning to Julius's foes late in his pontificate. The medal showed a mounted soldier being physically harassed and chastened by Christ. The iconography could have functioned as a reminder to allies and enemies alike that the pope possessed spiritual powers that trumped martial forces.<sup>191</sup>

The circumstances surrounding the St. Paul medal are further complicated by the existence of a second version that has a bearded depiction of Julius on the obverse and the same image of the conversion on the reverse (fig. 66).<sup>192</sup> The bearded portrait appears to be by Serbaldi since the sitter's physiognomy and the general style of the work resemble the obverse of the other St. Paul medal. Although the designs on the copes differ slightly, both images include the same morse and the same ornament on the orphrey. Hill and Weiss expressed doubts that the medal was created during Julius's reign. They offer little explanation, but their main objection was the crowded and amateurish nature of the inscription.<sup>193</sup> The phrasing of the epigraph is similar to that on the obverse of the other St. Paul medal, but the size and spacing of the lettering differs greatly.<sup>194</sup> It was not the first instance of Serbaldi producing the sort of typeface found on the bearded medal. The inscription on the reverse of two of the medals for the Palace of Justice spilled into the border, and the two D's at the end of the word REDD are not uniform (fig. 58-

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<sup>191</sup> Although the medal's pictorial and linguistic content highlighted Julius's connection to the Divine, if it had been intended to commemorate Alfonso I's excommunication then it would have theoretically cast the duke as a Pauline figure. Such a flattering allusion for the pope's enemy indicates that the medal may have served a purpose other than commemorating the excommunication.

<sup>192</sup> Hill, cat. 867.

<sup>193</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 179. Hill, cat. 867.

<sup>194</sup> The obverse inscription on the bearded medal reads, IVLIVS SECVNDVS LIGVR PM, "Julius the Second, the Ligurian, Pontifex Maximus." While this exact phrasing is unique to the bearded obverse, a number of variations of phrasing appear on Julius's medals. No linguistic element from this particular inscription indicates that the medal was produced after Julius's reign.

59). This style did not seem to bother the patron since the same reverse was used on two different medals, nor did any previous scholar comment on the epigraphy.<sup>195</sup>

Having handled the bearded version of the St. Paul medal in the Vatican *Medagliere*, I can attest to its early date. The patina and overall wear on the object are consistent with medals produced during Julius's reign. Furthermore, the thickness of the medal and the rough edges resemble those of other early-sixteenth-century productions.<sup>196</sup> It is unclear if Hill or Weiss handled this version of the medal. Weiss did not illustrate the bearded medal, and a number of medals post-dating Julius portray the pontiff with a beard, thus he may have based his conclusion on a copy after an original production. Many such examples exist, including one in the collection of the Musei Civici di Vicenza.<sup>197</sup>

The issue of facial hair was all but ignored by Hill and Weiss, even though its presence may help clarify the date, impetus, and meaning of the medal. The story of Julius's beard is by now a famous episode in his biography. After failing to expel the French army from Italy in the summer of 1510, Julius grew a beard and vowed not to shave until the enemy forces were defeated. The appearance of a bearded pontiff must have been quite scandalous, as it was remarked upon by several chroniclers and diplomats.<sup>198</sup> Julius's beard has been interpreted as a sort of pledge or oath signifying his resolve against the French. It was recorded not just in Serbaldi's medal, but in a number of Raphael's portraits in the Vatican Stanze (fig. 67), as well

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<sup>195</sup> The reverse was coupled with the obverses from Hill, cats. 224 and 225.

<sup>196</sup> Scher, "Connoisseurship," 8-10. Modesti, 515, agrees that the bearded medal was produced during Julius's reign, noting that the two sides of the medal are perfectly aligned. His conclusions, however, must be viewed with caution, as they are sometimes unreliable and are often intended for collectors rather than scholars.

<sup>197</sup> Armando Bernardelli and Renato Zirona, *Il medagliere dei Musei Civici di Vicenza: Le medaglie papali* (Vicenza: Silvana Editoriale, 2007), 82, cat. 332.

<sup>198</sup> Mark Zucker, "Raphael and the Beard of Pope Julius II," *Art Bulletin* 59, no. 4 (1977): 526. Douglas Biow, "The Beard in Sixteenth-Century Italy," in *The Body in Early Modern Italy*, eds. Julia Hairston and Walter Stephens (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 176-82.

as in Raphael's independent portrait of the pope (fig. 68).<sup>199</sup> Typical of Julius's personality, he shaved his beard for dramatic effect in March 1512, just before the Lateran Council, a diplomatic body intended to counter the encroaching French presence in Italy. In the months following Julius's change of face, fortune turned against the French juggernaut and they were driven from the Italian peninsula.<sup>200</sup>

Since Julius was bearded from the summer of 1510 until March 1512, the medal would logically have been created during this period. As for the unbearded version of the St. Paul medal, which reused an obverse from a medal dated to 1509, it could have been produced anytime from 1509 until the end of Julius's reign, including the period when he wore a beard. The Pauline imagery would have been appropriate for communicating the message of spiritual strength and authority that Julius was attempting to emphasize during the latter portion of his pontificate.

Another work of art that can be interpreted as posing a divine threat was likely the final medal commissioned by Julius (fig. 69). Created by Gian Cristoforo Romano, the portrait was closely modeled on the obverse used for the struck medal of Peace (fig. 49). The two medals were clearly made from different dies, however, as the earlier one has a diameter of 36 mm while the later one measures only 26 mm across.<sup>201</sup> Instead of an image of Peace and Justice the reverse features a scorpion paired with an inscription that quotes a portion of Ezekiel 33:11. The full Bible verse reads, "Say to them: As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways:

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<sup>199</sup> Julius is depicted bearded and in the guise of Pope Gregory IX in the scene of *Law* in the Stanza della Segnatura. He is shown with a beard in the *Mass of Bolsena* and the *Expulsion of Heliodorus*, both of which are in the Stanza di Eliodoro. Béguin and Garofalo, 131-39. Rowland, "Vatican Stanze," 109-10.

<sup>200</sup> Zucker, 530.

<sup>201</sup> Hill, cats. 873 and 877.

and why will you die, O house of Israel?”<sup>202</sup>Lacking evidence Weiss refused to provide a thorough explanation for the medal. Hill interpreted the reverse as an allusion to Julius’s relaxation of the persecution of Rome’s Jewish population, since the scorpion was an emblem of heresy and the Bible passage addresses the Israelites.<sup>203</sup>

Amazingly, a critical feature of the medal’s reverse was completely overlooked by both scholars. Hiding in plain sight, several stars are superimposed on the arachnid’s body, indicating that the image depicted not simply a small animal, but the constellation and zodiacal sign, Scorpio.<sup>204</sup>In light of this evidence I disagree with Hill’s reading and propose that the medal was not an advertisement of the pontiff’s clemency, but instead a warning to his enemies, specifically to the Council of Pisa.<sup>205</sup> I propose that the medal dates to 1511 because the controversial council began on November 5 of the same year, under the sign of the Scorpio.<sup>206</sup>

Julius’s political and military maneuvering, while largely effective in recovering territories and rebuilding Rome, drew strong criticism from his adversaries, chief among whom was King Louis XII of France. The Council of Pisa, backed by the French monarch, convened

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<sup>202</sup> Hill, cat. 873. The entire verse is not included on the reverse, which omits the reference to the House of Israel. NOLLO MORTEN PECATORIS SED MAGIS CONVERTATVR ET VIVAT, “I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live.” The full Latin inscription is as follows: *Dic ad eos: Vivo ego, dicit Dominus Deus, nolo mortem impii, sed ut convertatur impius a via sua, et vivat. Convertimini, convertimini a viis vestris pessimis; et quare moriemini, domus Israel?*

<sup>203</sup> Hill, cat. 873. Weiss, “Julius,” 176.

<sup>204</sup> I suspect that Hill and Weiss missed the stars and thus the astrological reference because the version of the medal they were viewing was most likely quite worn. The image in Hill is of a largely effaced plaster cast of the original medal. Hill, cat. 873. Strangely, Toderi and Vannel more recently published a catalogue that included a clear image of the medal and its stars, yet they too did not mention them. Toderi and Vannel, 647. The stars have only been mentioned in a non-scholarly publication intended for collectors and dealers of coins and medals. Modesti, 513.

<sup>205</sup> Nelson Minnich, “The Image of Julius II in the ACTA of the Councils of Pisa-Milan-Asti-Lyons (1511-12) and Lateran V (1512-17),” in *Giulio II: Papa, Politico, Mecenate*, ed. Giovanna Rotondi Terminiello and Giulio Nepi (Genova: De Ferrari and Devega, 2005), 79-82. Chambers, 126. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 291-92.

<sup>206</sup> Weiss dates it to between 1506 and 1511. Weiss, “Julius,” 176. Hill puts it at the beginning of the pope’s reign. Hill, cat. 873.

from 1511 to 1512. It consisted primarily of high-ranking French clerics, and their main goal was to depose the pope.<sup>207</sup> I suggest that the Scorpion medal was struck as a response to the schismatic assembly. The artwork featured both religious and astrological content, which functioned to align Julius with the divine as well as with broader forces in the cosmos. The emblem of heresy prominently featured on the medal's reverse was directed at his personal enemies and any would-be enemies of the Church.

## **Conclusion**

The proposed dates and attributions for Julius's medals are imperfect, but this is to be expected when dealing with an incomplete set of documents. Despite these shortcomings, there is a sufficient framework from which to begin analyzing the corpus. Integrating the medals into Julius's political career makes a few points clear. In terms of chronology, the medals span nearly his entire pontificate, with a noticeable cluster produced during the middle of his reign. It appears that while Julius was busy building and fighting, specifically from 1506-09, he still invested resources in the medallic commemoration of his achievements and proliferation of his ideology.

The medals lack a unified style, which was largely due to the employment of several artists. The imagery and inscriptions vary, and even the portraits do not fully resemble one another. Despite the disparate nature of the works of art, his continued reliance on medals indicated a trust in the medium. Considering the changing political circumstances Julius faced throughout his reign, his repeated use of portrait medals speaks to the complexity and adaptability of the genre.

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<sup>207</sup> Minnich, "Image of Julius II," 77-82. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 291-92.

While Julius's medallic corpus was unprecedented in terms of volume and variety of content, certain aspects of his patronage were based on the practices of earlier pontiffs. Many of Julius's medals included images of architecture, which presumably stemmed from the tradition of popes casting themselves as builders. Paul II, Sixtus IV, and Alexander VI all had architectural medals.<sup>208</sup> Personifications of classical virtues had also been featured on the medals of multiple Quattrocento popes, and Julius used similar iconography on three of his medals (figs. 48-49 and 60).<sup>209</sup> Furthermore, three of Julius's papal predecessors had scenes of the enthroned pontiff on the reverses of their medals, which may have been sources of inspiration for Julius's enthronement medal (fig. 45).<sup>210</sup>

Not all of Julius's portrait medals drew from the commissions of earlier popes. He was the first to deviate from the standard papal costume, the cope and morse, when he was depicted in *camauro* and *mozzetta* on three of his medals (figs. 38, 40, and 48).<sup>211</sup> Julius was also the first pontiff to commission medals with Bible verses as inscriptions (figs. 49 and 69), and he was the first to illustrate a biblical passage on a medal (figs. 65-66).<sup>212</sup> The pope's willingness to follow tradition when necessary, yet break from convention when demanded by the circumstances, aptly characterizes Julius's medallic patronage as well as his shrewd approach to governance.

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<sup>208</sup> For Paul II's architectural medals, see Hill, cats. 780. For Sixtus IV's architectural medals, see Hill, cats. 806. For Alexander VI's architectural medals, see Hill, cats. 854-55.

<sup>209</sup> For Sixtus IV's medals with classical personifications, see Hill, cats. 751, 753. For Innocent VIII's medals with classical personifications, see Hill, cats. 927-28. For Julius II's medals with classical personifications, see Hill, cats. 222, 227, 877.

<sup>210</sup> For Paul II's enthronement medals, see Hill, cats. 761bis, 765, 766. For Sixtus IV's enthronement medals, see Hill, cats. 437, 807. For Alexander VI's enthronement medal, see Hill, cat. 853. For Julius II's enthronement medal, see Hill, cat. 875.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, cats. 222, 660, 876.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, cats. 445, 866, 867, 873, 874, 877.

## CHAPTER 2 The Personae of Pope Julius II

The primary goal of this chapter is to determine how Julius and his advisors exploited the genre of the portrait medal in order to construct numerous personae that presented the pontiff as the ideal ecclesiastical prince. Shifting and mutating throughout the Quattrocento and early Cinquecento, the pope's role in international affairs was complex and often unstable.<sup>1</sup> He was the spiritual leader of Western Christianity, but he was also the temporal ruler of the Papal States. His territory encompassed vast portions of central Italy, extending south from Rome into the Campagna and north into the Romagna (fig. 76). Positioned at the nexus of religion and politics like no other European ruler, Julius exploited the genre of portrait medals in order to articulate and assert his secular and spiritual authority.

The multifaceted role of the pope was reflected in the divergent nature of the messages delivered through Julius's portrait medals. The nearly two-dozen works of art did not present a unified image of the pontiff; instead they offered several different impressions of the ruler that varied depending on his needs. The medium was well suited to this ever-changing task. Double-sided and combining text and images, the multivalent nature of medals was an outstanding format for constructing and communicating Julius's various personae. Unlike other visual media such as fresco cycles or large-scale sculptures, a group of portrait medals did not need to be unified or even create an impression of unity. Julius's medals were crafted over the course of several years by as many as six artists, working under differing artistic charges and political circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), passim. Gerald Christianson, Thomas M. Izbicki, and Christopher M. Bellitto, *The Church, the Councils, and Reform: The Legacy of the Fifteenth Century* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008), passim, esp. 194-211.

<sup>2</sup> As many as nine artists created medals for Julius if one includes the three made for him as a cardinal. For a discussion of all the artists see Roberto Weiss, "The Medals of Pope Julius II (1503-1513)," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 163-80.

The patron was able to express a particular message in one medal, and a completely different, even contradictory, message in a later commission.

Since I rely heavily on the term “persona,” I will attempt to define it as clearly as possible. It originally comes from the Latin word for a theatrical mask, which is appropriate considering my use of the term. Portraiture is often performative in nature and can act as a false face for the individual depicted. According to Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary it is “an individual’s social facade or front,” as well as “the personality that a person (as an actor or politician) projects in public.”<sup>3</sup> Its twentieth-century usage derives from the analytic psychology of Carl Jung, and it reflects the role that is played in life by an individual.<sup>4</sup>

It is not completely verifiable that Julius and his advisers fully understood what they were doing as far as constructing personae, but based on the content of the medals, the function of the genre, and the social and political milieu of High Renaissance Rome, it appears that this was precisely their intention. One of the primary topics in Baldassare Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier* dealt with the best way to present oneself in high-status social interactions. The famous segment of dialogue in which the term *sprezzatura* was coined was more than a simple discussion of manners. Rather, it dealt with the notion of an individual creating a social façade while simultaneously concealing any effort that such a façade existed.<sup>5</sup> Although it was not published until 1528, Castiglione began writing *The Courtier* in 1513, the year Julius died.<sup>6</sup> The

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<sup>3</sup> From <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/persona>, accessed on July 11, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Carl Jung, *Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume 6: Psychological Types*, eds. Herbert Read, Michael Fordham and Gerhard Adler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 465.

<sup>5</sup> Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier: The Singleton Translation*, ed. Daniel Javitch (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002), 31-33, I.26. J.R. Woodhouse, *Baldesar Castiglione: A Reassessment of The Courtier* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1978), 76-82.

<sup>6</sup> A useful timeline of Castiglione’s career is included in Javitch’s edition of *The Courtier*. Castiglione, 401-02.



author and diplomat had a number of connections to the pope. He was employed by Julius's nephew, Duke Francesco Maria Della Rovere, and he was a close friend of Raphael.<sup>7</sup>

Similar ideas about the construction and presentation of a public persona were discussed throughout much of *The Prince*. Writing shortly after Julius's death and mentioning the pontiff several times by name, Machiavelli was concerned with the personal identity of a ruler and how subjects viewed their sovereign.<sup>8</sup> He pointed out the importance of a prince's reputation, emphasizing that rulers should avoid being characterized as "inconstant, frivolous, effeminate, [or] pusillanimous."<sup>9</sup> Machiavelli was interested in how the perception of an individual affected one's ability to establish and maintain power, and he focused on what could be done to "preserve the prestige of his office."<sup>10</sup> Both Castiglione and Machiavelli were working in the wake of Julius's pontificate and both discussed how it was necessary for individuals to pass off illusion as reality, be it for social or political advancement.

Joanna Woods-Marsden discussed portrait medals in a similar light. She wrote, "The reverses of these double-sided *objets d'art* allowed the commissioner, whose likeness is portrayed on the obverse, consciously to project an image of his circumstances, achievements, and enthusiasms, and, unconsciously, his fantasies, illusions, and pretensions."<sup>11</sup> I agree that her statement holds true for most patrons. The images on Julius's medals, however, directly contradicted the events of his papacy to such a large degree that they could not have been the

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<sup>7</sup> Castiglione, 58-60, I.50-52.

<sup>8</sup> Quentin Skinner, introduction to Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Russell Price, ed. Quentin Skinner (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), -, x.

<sup>9</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 64.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 64, 72, 79.

<sup>11</sup> Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Images of Castles in the Renaissance: Symbols of 'Signoria'/Symbols of Tyranny," *Art Journal* 48/2, (1989): 132.

result of mere unconscious projections of an ideal self-image. I propose that his medals went beyond simple self-flattery and into the realm of the active manipulation of public perception.

Portraiture is a genre that purports to tell the truth, yet it is actually a fiction that employs a carefully crafted illusion, the product of which is an idealized representation rather than an accurate rendering of an individual. In semiotic terms a portrait can be interpreted as a counterfeited index, in that it proffers as factual evidence that which is actually a construction. In reality a portrait is an icon loaded with symbols, or signs imbued with conventional meanings, that the patron hopes will be misinterpreted as having indexical value.<sup>12</sup> Patrons exploited the conventional belief that a portrait is a record of a particular occurrence that communicates some truth about an individual. In the words of Richard Brilliant, portraiture is “a calculating art of (mis)representation.”<sup>13</sup>

The genre of medals was well suited to the task of constructing personae. A recognizable portrait of an individual was labeled with the sitter’s name and titles, and it was paired with emblematic imagery that adorned the reverse of the object. The minute detail afforded by the medium created an impression of intimacy. Many of Julius’s medallion portraits show the sitter with a furrowed brow, folds of skin, and a stern facial expression. Yet due to the allusions made in the text and reverse image, the individual actually fit into a familiar mold that included famous predecessors such as prominent Renaissance rulers or heroes from antiquity or the Bible. By the time Julius’s medals were crafted in the early Cinquecento, Italian princes had been commissioning these tiny works of art for more than half a century, meaning that earlier medals

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<sup>12</sup> Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, “Semiotics and Art History,” *Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (1991): 189-91. Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk, *Art History: A Critical Introduction to its Methods* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2006), 209-10. Charles Peirce, “Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs,” in *Semiotics: An introductory anthology*, ed. Robert Innis (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1986), 9-19.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 25, 35.

could function as models for artists and points of reference for viewers. Several personae are represented in Julius's corpus of medals, including that of peacemaker, imperial ruler, priest, and divine messenger.

### **Julius the Peacemaker**

One of the most enduring themes in Julius's medals was that of benevolent and peaceful ruler. Three of his medals featured shepherds on the reverses (figs. 43, 61-62) and two others included personifications of Peace (figs. 48-49).<sup>14</sup> I argue that the pope commissioned these works of art precisely because of the fact that he was at war with various Italian and European powers for most of his papacy. He was fighting in order to regain control of the Church's territorial possessions, yet his militant approach was harshly condemned by contemporaries. Of the five medals mentioned here, three of them date to 1506-07 and two are from 1508-13. All of them incorporate overtly peaceful imagery, thereby highlighting the Christ-like nature of the papacy. It seems that the medals were intended to help deflect criticism from the pope's direct involvement in armed conflict by casting Julius as a pastoral figure and emphasizing his Petrine authority. The propagandistic function of portrait medals and the specificity of the papal role greatly affected the manner in which the pontiff was presented in the genre of portrait medals.

The sitter in each of these works of art filled a unique religious and political role as the leader of the Church that was accompanied by a specific set of cultural and ideological conventions. The pope was the successor to St. Peter, the first pontiff, and upon his election he

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<sup>14</sup> George Francis Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini, Volume 1* (London: British Museum, 1930, reprinted, Florence: SPES, 1984), cats. 222, 228, 229, 661, and 877.

was believed to “assume the person of Christ.”<sup>15</sup> As such he had broad spiritual powers over the whole of Western Christianity. The pope’s authority was based on Scripture, among other sources. In Matthew 16:18-19, Jesus says, “Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.”<sup>16</sup> With Rome as its capital, the pope was also the temporal ruler of the Papal States. Besieged by foreign powers, he was attempting to preserve his territories and expand his dominion.<sup>17</sup>

Although Julius famously accompanied his troops on military campaigns, very significantly he never commissioned a portrait in *any* medium in which he was portrayed in martial attire. Pontifical vestments will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter, but suffice it to say that Julius, like all of the popes who commissioned medals before him, was shown in each image wearing attire that was distinctly papal. Martial apparel and iconography were expressly avoided, while references to divine sanction were common, even in this classicizing genre.

Unlike the pope, many secular princes during the Renaissance openly used military imagery on both sides of their medals. The obverse of Pisanello’s medal of Sigismondo Malatesta, for example, shows the sitter in plate armor (fig. 77), while on the reverse of

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<sup>15</sup> Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani, *The Pope’s Body*, trans. David Peterson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 91-92. The quotation come from a memorandum written by Bishop Robert Grosseteste in 1250 that was read aloud to Pope Innocent IV. Paolo Prodi, *The Papal Prince*, trans. Susan Haskins (New York: Cambridge University Press), 1987, 6-17. Joanna Woods-Marsden, “One Artist, Two Sitters, One Role: Raphael’s Papal Portraits,” in *Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 120-24.

<sup>16</sup> In Latin Matthew 16:18-19 reads, *Et ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam, et portae inferi non praevalent adversum eam. Et tibi dabo claves regni caelorum. Et quodcumque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum in caelis; et quodcumque solveris super terram, erit solutum in caelis.*

<sup>17</sup> Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 124-35. Ludwig Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), trans., Frederick Antrobus (London: Butler and Tanner, 1923), 216-40.

Sperandio's medal of Federico da Montefeltro, the *condottiere* was depicted on horseback charging into battle (fig. 78).<sup>18</sup> Because Julius was a religious leader, the iconography of his commissions was dictated by different conventions than those applied to the art of other rulers. The closest that any of Julius's medals came to depicting combat was an image used on the reverses of two of his medals from 1509-13 that showed a Roman soldier being knocked off of a horse (figs. 65-66).<sup>19</sup> This was of course a representation of the conversion of St. Paul, and it was accompanied by an inscription from the Acts of the Apostles. Rather than a military image, it was a scene of divine demilitarization since it showed Paul as he was miraculously converted from a soldier into a follower of Christ.<sup>20</sup>

Prelates were typically supposed to avoid violence, not only in the fictive world of the visual arts, but in their actions as well, although there was not a definitive ban on clerics' participation in battle. Conflict regarding the involvement of ecclesiastics in military matters, both direct and indirect, predates the Renaissance by centuries and it persisted well into the Cinquecento. There was uneasiness about men of God spilling Christian blood or even pursuing war as a political tactic, yet it was often condoned as of means of defending the Church. As early as the twelfth century St. Bernard of Clairvaux described the pope's authority using the metaphor of two swords: one spiritual and the other physical. Divine authority belonged only to the pope, but regarding use of military force, St. Bernard said, "The [material] sword also is

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<sup>18</sup> Hill, cats. 34 and 389. Graham Pollard, Eleonora Luciano, and Maria Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: Volume One, Italy, The Collection of the National Gallery of Art, Systematic Catalogue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 22, cat. 13.

<sup>19</sup> Hill, cats. 866-67.

<sup>20</sup> The inscription could refer to either Acts 9:5 or Acts 26:14. Both passages refer to the same event and they use almost identical phrasing. For a discussion of the Bible verses and the Conversion of St. Paul medals, see text at note 187 in Chapter 1.

yours and is to be drawn from its sheath at your command, though not by your own hand.”<sup>21</sup>

During the Renaissance it was acceptable for cardinals to act as military generals, but it was a significant breach of decorum for a pope to take the battlefield. Although the precise reasons for this prohibition are unclear, it may deal with the singular nature of the pope as the successor to St. Peter and leader of Western Christianity.

As a cardinal Julius had led troops without controversy, not to mention without much success.<sup>22</sup> Unlike previous popes, however, he did not shy away from the battlefield when he became pontiff, and these actions were widely criticized by contemporaries. One of Julius’s top priorities was to reassert the dominion of the Church over the Papal States since control of its territories had diminished during the decades preceding his reign. In 1506 Julius marshaled papal troops along with the College of Cardinals for a controversial march from Rome to Bologna.<sup>23</sup> In doing so he mobilized the Church hierarchy for military action like no other time in memory in order to assert the authority of the Holy See.

Julius gained further notoriety for his role in the siege of Mirandola in January 1511. The elderly pontiff famously braved freezing temperatures and artillery fire in order to oversee military operations. The pope was so close to the battle that he was nearly hit by enemy fire, and once the town’s walls were breached he quickly entered using a ladder rather than waiting for the gates to be opened.<sup>24</sup> Actions such as these understandably drew criticism from his adversaries. Francesco Guicciardini, the Florentine historian and statesman, ridiculed the bellicose pope for

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<sup>21</sup> D.S. Chambers, *Popes, Cardinals and War: The Military Church in the Renaissance and Early Modern Europe* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 12-13.

<sup>22</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 19-23.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 151-52.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 268-71.

his behavior. Guicciardini wrote, “to see that the supreme pontiff, the vicar of Christ on earth, old and ill..., should have come in person to a war waged by him against Christians..., where subjecting himself like the captain of an army to fatigue and dangers, he retained nothing of the pope about him but the robes and the name.”<sup>25</sup> Although Guicciardini admired Julius’s valor, the pope’s participation in battle was deemed highly inappropriate for a man of his station.

*Julius Exclusus*, the satirical dialogue first printed in 1517 and attributed to Erasmus, was even more explicitly critical of the pontiff. In the text St. Peter derided Julius for wearing liturgical vestments on top of armor. Offended by the criticism, Julius’s character responded by threatening to attack heaven’s gates with his armies.<sup>26</sup> Although the pope was never depicted as a military leader in any portrait that he commissioned, others did not hesitate to dress him as a general. In an anonymous woodcut from c. 1522-23, which was included with some editions of *Julius Exclusus*, he was shown wearing armor beneath ecclesiastical vestments as he attempted to bring his troops through heaven’s gates (fig. 79). His behavior was strongly denounced, not only in posthumous attacks by former contemporaries, but also during his lifetime. A group of high-ranking clerics, for example, accused him of numerous crimes. The charges ranged from negligence to wrongfully imprisoning cardinals, but their final decree focused on Julius’s role in promoting and engaging in warfare.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Francesco Guicciardini, *Storia d’Italia*, Vol. 2 (Milano: Garzanti Libri, 2006), Book IX, Chapter XIII. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 270.

<sup>26</sup> Chambers, 1-3. J.K. Sowards, *The Julius Exclusus of Erasmus* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 7-32.

<sup>27</sup> The group of clerics referred to here was the Council of Pisa, which will be addressed in greater detail later in the dissertation. It convened from 1511 to 1512 at the behest of the French king, Louis XII, with the goal of deposing the pope. Nelson Minnich, “The Image of Julius II in the ACTA of the Councils of Pisa-Milan-Asti-Lyons (1511-12) and Lateran V (1512-17),” in *Giulio II: Papa, Politico, Mecenate*, ed. Giovanna Rotondi Terminiello and Giulio Nepi (Genova: De Ferrari and Devega, 2005), 79-82. Chambers, 126. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 292. J.H. Burns, “Angelo da Vallombrosa and the Pisan Schism,” in *The Church, the Councils, and Reform the Legacy of the Fifteenth Century*, eds. Gerald Christianson, Thomas M Izbicki, and Christopher M Bellitto (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 194-211.

## **Julius the Peacemaker: Medals of Shepherds**

It was in this trying political context that the pope and his advisers attempted to craft his public image using portrait medals, among other media, which were distributed to allies in Rome and other Italian courts. One such example was a medal cast by Caradosso Foppa in 1506, the reverse of which includes a depiction of a shepherd gathering his flock (fig. 43). The figure is seated under a tree, the intertwining branches of which strongly suggest the oak of the Della Rovere family crest. Encircling the image is an inscription that reads, “I lead the sheep that have been saved to rest using a shepherd’s crook.”<sup>28</sup>

The occasion for which the medal was commissioned is unknown, but based on the date and subject matter, it was likely intended to commemorate the historic expedition of Church officials and soldiers that Julius required to join him as he made his way through the Papal States. With Julius’s portrait on the obverse and a shepherd gathering his flock on the reverse, it symbolized the task of tending to the territories that had strayed from papal control.<sup>29</sup> The use of non-military iconography presented the potentially bloody task in a more decorous light. It functioned to highlight the pope’s pastoral role and deemphasize martial aspects of the campaign.<sup>30</sup>

Two later medals, both struck between 1508 and 1513 by Pier Maria Serbaldi, also featured shepherds on the reverses along with the terse inscription TVTELA, which translates to “Protection” or “Guardianship” (figs. 61-62). During this period Julius faced constant military

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<sup>28</sup> The inscription on the medal reads as follows: PEDO SERVATAS OVES AD REQUIEM AGO. Hill, cat. 661.

<sup>29</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 149-52.

<sup>30</sup> Chambers, 1-3, 134-66.



struggles with Venice and France over disputed territories, including Rimini, Ravenna, Ferrara, and Bologna.<sup>31</sup> It is unknown whether the striking of these medals was prompted by a specific event or if they were simply meant to express the papacy's general policy towards its subjects and territorial possessions.

Depictions of shepherds were unprecedented in portrait medals, and to my knowledge no coins, ancient or modern, had used this iconography either. With wide-reaching temporal and religious authority, the pontiff was unlike any other ruler in Europe, and the unique nature of the position was reflected in the iconography accompanying the sitter. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli highlighted the distinctive character of the papacy, devoting an entire chapter to ecclesiastical principalities in order to describe the rule of the Church.<sup>32</sup> An image of a shepherd, previously unseen in a numismatic context, would have evoked not simply any ruler, like the many despots throughout Italy, but a Christ-like protector.

References to the Lord as shepherd are used more than a dozen times throughout the Old and New Testaments.<sup>33</sup> These emblems underscored the divine nature of the pope's role and linked it to the scriptural foundation on which his claim to power was based. The medals may also have been intended to evoke John 21:16, in which Christ instructs Peter to "Feed my lambs."<sup>34</sup> The Bible verse was used by Renaissance preachers to justify Petrine authority.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 235-36, 240-45.

<sup>32</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapter 11. David Peterson, "Machiavelli and the Petrine Succession," in *Florence and Beyond: Culture, Society and Politics in Renaissance Italy*, eds. David Peterson and Daniel Bornstein (Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008), 443-45.

<sup>33</sup> The term "shepherd" was used in numerous books of the Old Testament, and, more importantly, it can be found in all four Gospels. Some examples include Matthew 9:36, Mark 6:34, Luke 2:18, John 10:11.

<sup>34</sup> The full passage reads, "He said to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he had said to him the third time: Lovest thou me? And he said to him: Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep." *Dicit ei tertio: Simon Johannis, amas me? Contristatus est Petrus, quia dixit ei tertio, Amas me? et dixit ei: Domine, tu omnia nosti, tu scis quia amo te. Dixit ei: Pasce*

Coupled with the inscription, “Guardianship,” the medals emphasized not only the pope’s personal virtue, as was typically the case with this genre, but his spiritual authority as well. The TVTELA medals were thus employed to justify the pope’s political and military actions on religious grounds and pass them off as divinely sanctioned protection of Christ’s followers.

### **Julius the Peacemaker: Medals of Peace**

Despite his extensive personal involvement in war, Julius commissioned two medals with personifications of Peace on the reverses, both of which are attributed to Gian Cristoforo Romano. The use of iconography that appears to contradict the events of Julius’s pontificate can be explained by the theories of Harry Berger, a scholar of Renaissance portraits. Berger explained that portraits can be characterized as an index of the conspiracy between sitter and artist. In other words, the act of portrayal was a fiction meant to convince the viewer that the sitter embodied the characteristics expressed in the image.<sup>36</sup>

In the case of a medal, the sitter was not only meant to embody the characteristics of the portrait on the obverse, but also those in the imagery of the reverse. In light of Berger’s theory, Julius’s medals must be viewed not as reflections of the sitter’s character, as has often been the case with Renaissance portraits, but as attempts by the artist and patron to dissimulate, and to construct the sitter as the ideal pontiff. The iconography of the medals was employed to cloak Julius’s actions in the qualities typically associated with images of the pope as the living embodiment of Christ and conduit to the divine. This sort of deception was necessary

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*oves meas.*

<sup>35</sup> John O’Malley, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1979), 221-22.

<sup>36</sup> Harry Berger, “Fictions of the Pose: Facing the Gaze of Early Modern Portraiture,” *Representations*, no. 46 (1994): 89-90. Harry Berger, *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 77-94.

considering the pope's aggressive stance towards regaining the Church's possessions and the strictures against papal participation in war.

The medals may be characterized as having functioned as Julius's surrogates, thereby relieving him, at least partially, of the duty of appearing eminently papal and Christ-like.<sup>37</sup> They would have been distributed to his courtly allies in order to commemorate his accomplishments and spread his propaganda. The pointed imagery of the medals, in conjunction with the inscriptions, colored the events of his pontificate and crafted his persona in a favorable manner. Julius, like other Renaissance popes, attempted to capitalize on the political power of the sacred by having himself depicted as a regal yet pious figure. It was critical that he be understood as Christ-like, since his temporal reign was bound to his spiritual authority. If Julius were perceived as a warrior, as his enemies hoped he would be, then his spiritual authority, along with his secular power, would be undermined.<sup>38</sup>

One of the medals of Peace was cast, and it likely dates to the period after Julius's entry into Bologna in November, 1506, and before his return to Rome in March, 1507 (fig. 48).<sup>39</sup> During this expedition Julius recovered Perugia and Bologna from the Baglioni and Bentivoglio families respectively, and he returned order to much of the Papal States.<sup>40</sup> The medal, which features personifications of Peace and Fortune holding hands and proclaims that the pontiff is the "Recoverer of Justice, Peace, and Faith," was seemingly created to celebrate the pope's

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<sup>37</sup> Berger, "Fictions of the Pose: Facing," 112, quoting Jean-Paul Sartre, who wrote that portraits, "relieve the prince of the burden of imagining his divine right...."

<sup>38</sup> Peterson, 449.

<sup>39</sup> As quoted by Weiss, "Julius," 172-73, *Due figure et un sacrificio che ad judicio de ogni intelligente alli boni antichi se po comparer*, from A. Venturi, "Gian Cristoforo Romano," *Archivio storica dell' arte*, I, 1888, 151, n. 2. Jacopo d'Atri described the work in a letter to Isabella d'Este written from Naples on October 24, 1507.

<sup>40</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 259-63. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 147-52.

accomplishments on the campaign.<sup>41</sup> The imagery and inscription illustrate that even after a military expedition Julius and his advisers presented him not as a warrior, but as a peacemaker, perhaps indicating that they were aware of the criticism of his direct involvement in martial affairs.<sup>42</sup>

The other medal of Peace was struck rather than cast. Its precise date is unknown, but the style indicates that the medal was from the second half of Julius's pontificate (fig. 49).<sup>43</sup> Ridolfino Venuti suggested that the medal was meant to commemorate a specific peace agreement between the Orsini and Colonna families.<sup>44</sup> While this is possible, no mention of the incident or families is included in the iconography or inscription. Instead the medal offers a general reference to the pope as bearer of peace and justice, thereby further propagating Julius's persona as a peacemaker in a general sense rather than commemorating a specific event.

The figural composition on the reverse is simple and conservative, but when paired with the inscription it is rather complex and innovative. An abundance of numismatic precedents exist for two figures standing side by side on a ground line. Many Roman imperial coins feature this layout as do several Renaissance medals, including one of Pope Sixtus IV (fig. 73) and Julius's cast medal of Peace.<sup>45</sup> Regarding the struck medal of Peace, the personification on the left is a common subject from ancient Roman coinage. It holds what appears to be an olive

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<sup>41</sup> The reverse inscription reads, IVSTITIAE PACIS FIDEIQ RECVPERATOR. Hill, cat. 222.

<sup>42</sup> Julius had many critics during and after his lifetime, among whom were Francesco Guicciardini and Desiderius Erasmus. Guicciardini, Book IX, Chapter XIII. Sowards, *Julius Exclusus of Erasmus*, Erasmus, *Julius Exclusus*, 7-25. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 270.

<sup>43</sup> This struck medal of Peace may have been referred to in a document for payment to Gian Cristoforo Romano in 1506, but that document may refer to payment for a different medal. Weiss, "Julius," 172-74.

<sup>44</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 174. Hill, cat. 877. Ridolfino Venuti, *Numismata romanorum pontificum praestantiora a Martino V ad Benedictum XIV* (Rome: J. B. Bernabo and J. Lazzarini, 1744), 53.

<sup>45</sup> Hill cats. 222 and 753. J.P.C. Kent, *Roman Coins* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1978), passim, esp. figs. 175, 190, and 214.

branch, and it represents Peace.<sup>46</sup> The personification on the right has a cornucopia in one hand and scales in the other, while a small fire burns on the far right edge of the ground line. The meaning of the fire is unknown, and there does not appear to be a precedent for it in ancient currency. The figure represents Justice, or *Aequitas*, and the type is derived directly from Roman imperial coin images of *Aequitas*, such as the one in fig. 80.<sup>47</sup>

The choice of the *Aequitas* type is noteworthy, especially considering that an established depiction of Justice already existed. An image of *Aequitas* was the more classicizing of the two choices, but Justice would have been a perfectly suitable subject for a portrait medal. A personification of Justice with a sword and scales had been used on two medals of Pope Innocent VIII that were cast c. 1480-86 (fig. 81) and on a medal commissioned by Julius in 1508 (fig. 60).<sup>48</sup> I suggest that a figure grasping a cornucopia was chosen to lend an air of generosity and saintliness to the image. The sword was itself a weapon and had overtly violent connotations, thus it would have detracted from Julius's persona as a peacemaker.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Many examples of coins with personifications of Peace or *Pax* have survived from antiquity. For a coin of Vespasian with *Pax* on the reverse, see Harold Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, Volume II (London: British Museum, 1966), 119, plate 21.5. Kent, fig. 434. The implement held by the figure has a somewhat vague form, but it is probably supposed to be an olive branch. Multiple types of branches were used on Roman coins, so it is possible that a laurel or palm branch was intended. John Melville-Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins* (London: Seaby, 1990), 238-39, 319-20. For a more thorough discussion of the subject see note 151 in Chapter 1.

<sup>47</sup> Hill identifies the figure as Abundance, which is incorrect. Weiss correctly identifies it as *Aequitas*, which he describes as a synonym for justice. Hill, cat. 877. Weiss, "Julius," 174. Many ancient Roman coins with images of AEQVITAS exist, and the figure on the struck medal of peace is clearly derived from these models. Examples from the second and third centuries AD hold scales in right hand and a cornucopia in the left, while first century AD coins of AEQUITAS have a spear-like scepter called a *pertica* instead of a cornucopia. For the cornucopia type see Mattingly, *Coins*, Volume III, Aurelius cat. 359. For the *pertica* type, see Mattingly, *Coins*, Volume II, 129, plate 23.8.

<sup>48</sup> The two medals of Pope Innocent VIII with figures of Justice are virtually identical. Hill, cats. 927 and 928. The figure of Justice on Julius's medal is reminiscent of an image of St. Michael the Archangel, who was also associated with castles and justice. Hill, cat. 227.

<sup>49</sup> Depictions of rulers from the period brandishing unsheathed swords were quite rare and were usually featured on equestrian images thus implying military action, as on the reverse of Francesco Sforza's gold ducat from 1462. Luke Syson, "Circulating a Likeness," in *The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance*, eds. Nicholas

*Aequitas* was used in spite of the fact that Justice was more in line with the biblical reference in the inscription, which is discussed below. The terms are not precisely synonyms but function as such on the medal. Whereas the concept of justice primarily deals with the enforcement of laws, often by means of violent execution, *aequitas* had broader connotations. It could indicate a sense of fairness, as opposed to malice, between individuals.<sup>50</sup> It could also refer to legal equity, and it was strongly associated with the idea of civic peace.<sup>51</sup> Had the artist used a figure of Justice rather than *Aequitas* the medal would have presumably been more comprehensible to viewers, as even Hill misread the symbolism and interpreted it as Abundance.<sup>52</sup> It appears that clarity was sacrificed to avoid the menacing image of a figure brandishing a sword.

The figures are not identified by text, and the only inscription on the reverse is a short phrase in the exergue that reads, OSCVLATE SVNT. This alluded to a portion of Psalms 84:11, which reads, *justitia et pax osculatae sunt*, “Justice and Peace havekissed.” The excerpt helped the viewer decipher the content of the medal, while the full verse added another layer of meaning. It reads, “Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have kissed.”<sup>53</sup> The inscription could imply that the pope was merciful with his enemies, while simultaneously rationalizing his violent actions on divine grounds. The most prominent features are the figures

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Mann and Luke Syson (London: British Museum Press, 1998), 113-15. Philip Grierson, *The Coins of Medieval Europe* (London: Seaby, 1991), 182-83.

<sup>50</sup> J. O'Reilly, *Studies in the iconography of the Virtues and Vices in the Middle Ages* (New York: Garland, 1988), 131. Ambrogio Lorenzetti's image of Justice in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, for example, holds a sword and a head of a decapitated individual. Nicolai Rubinstein, “Political Ideas in Sieneese Art: The Frescoes of Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Taddeo di Bartolo in the Palazzo Pubblico,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 21, (1958): 182.

<sup>51</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 49.

<sup>52</sup> Hill, cat. 877.

<sup>53</sup> The full Latin translation of Psalms 84:11 is *Misericordia et veritas obviaverunt sibi; justitia et pax osculatae sunt*.

of Justice and Peace. They visually dominate the field while drawing the viewers' attention to the positive results of the pope's wars. The use of a biblical reference in an *all' antica* genre, although not unique, would have stood out to viewers and highlighted the sitter's close connection to the divine.

The portrait of the pontiff on the obverse complemented the message of strength and pious clemency on the reverse. Julius's face is stern, yet his powerful countenance is contrasted by the slumped body of Christ as the Man of Sorrows depicted on his morse. The artist again juxtaposed power and piety in his carefully constructed image of the pontiff. Here and in other medals produced for the pope, Gian Cristoforo Romano masterfully exploited the tiniest details to further the message of the work of art.

By commissioning a medal with a depiction of Peace and Justice, and another mentioning these principles in the inscription, Julius and his advisors attempted to cast him in the well-established mold of a virtuous ruler. Associations between Justice and Peace preceded the Renaissance and continued through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. One famous example appears in the prologue of the Constitutions of Melfi, or *Liber Augustalis*, which was promulgated by Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II in 1231. Peace and Justice are described as two sisters embracing one another, evoking an image exactly like that on the struck medal of Peace.<sup>54</sup> Although it is unlikely that the artist knew the specific legal source, the uncanny

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<sup>54</sup> See the Prologue to Frederick II's Constitutions of Melfi. *The Liber Augustalis or Constitutions of Melfi Promulgated by the Emperor Frederick II for the Kingdom of Sicily in 1231*, trans. James M. Powell (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 4. "...Holy Church, the mother of the Christian religion, to be defiled by the sacred perfidies of slanderers of the faith. They should protect her from attacks of public enemies by power of the secular sword, and they should, if possible, preserve peace and, after the people have been pacified, justice, which embrace each other like two sisters..." For the original text see *Constitutionum Regni Siciliarum libri III*, ed. Andrea Romano (Catanzaro: Rubettino, 1999), vol. I, 4: *Christiane Religionis Matrem, detractorum fidei maculari clandestinis perfidiis non permittant, et ut ipsam ab hostium publicorum incuribus, gladii materialis potentia tueantur, utque pacem populis eisdemque pacificatis iustitiam, que velut due sorores se ad invicem amplexantur, pro posse conservent.*

similarities indicate that the very notion of Peace and Justice as a pair of females embracing was a well-worn trope exploited by sovereign figures. The qualities were not only deemed appropriate for respected secular rulers, but also for pontiffs, as some of Julius's predecessors had attempted to cultivate these virtues in their numismatic commissions. Two of the three medals commissioned by Innocent VIII feature personifications of Justice, Peace, and Abundance on the reverses, and the figures are explicitly identified in the inscriptions (fig. 81).<sup>55</sup> Although none of Alexander VI's medals included images of Peace and Justice, the inscriptions on the obverses of two of his four medals used these terms to describe the sitter (fig. 82).<sup>56</sup>

It is quite clear that Peace and Justice were reliable traits that could be exploited to characterize a pontiff and shape public perception of both the person and the position. By using Peace and Justice on his medals, Julius played upon viewers' expectations of what a good ruler and a virtuous pope should be. Pairing the qualities with an allusion to a Bible verse, as was the case with the struck medal of Peace, Julius was able to surpass earlier exemplars by adding a layer of piety to his carefully constructed persona as a just leader and propagator of peace.

While building on established traditions, Julius's medallic patronage transcended that of his predecessors through the complex messages articulated in the images and inscriptions. Whereas his medals of Peace and Justice exploited types used by earlier popes, the shepherd imagery was wholly innovative. It emphasized the singular nature of his position while remaining legible to viewers. Yet even pastoral iconography included imperial allusions. The shepherds were rendered not as biblical personages, but rather as classicizing, hulking figures (figs. 43 and 61-62). They were forged out of the stalwart models of antiquity and poised as if

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<sup>55</sup> Hill, cats. 927 and 928.

<sup>56</sup> The inscriptions read ALEXANDER VI PONT MAX IVST PACIS Q CVLTOR, and ALEXANDER VI PONT MAX IVST PAQ C, both of which translate to "Pope Alexander VI Cultivator of Justice and Peace." Hill, cats. 854 and 855. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 282, cat. 264.



ready to lead the Church through the High Renaissance. The two shepherd types used on a total of three medals are mostly nude, with only a cloth draped across the individuals' laps. They resemble the Belvedere Torso (fig. 26) more than depictions of Christ the Good Shepherd (fig. 83).<sup>57</sup>

The images explicitly emphasized Julius's pastoral role, but the strongly classicizing style of the images highlighted the pontiff's humanist leanings and subtly played upon his position as temporal ruler of Rome. In the background of Caradosso's Shepherd medal is a gate that bears a similarity to a triumphal arch, while the serpentine composition evokes reliefs from the Column of Trajan (fig. 84).<sup>58</sup> Reflecting Julius's aspirations, the powerful shepherd appears to lead a triumphant procession of the Christian flock in a manner reminiscent of the grandeur of ancient Rome.

As Church-specific iconography, the shepherd could not be featured on the medals of secular princes. Another example of imagery that was embraced by high-ranking clerics but shunned by lay rulers was that of the ship or boat. Andrea Guacialoti used this emblem on the reverse of a medal cast for Pope Nicholas V in 1455 (fig. 4).<sup>59</sup> Wearing a miter and holding a cross, the pontiff rides in a vessel labeled ECLESIA.<sup>60</sup> Similar iconography appeared on the reverse of a medal commissioned by Julius while he was still a cardinal (fig. 30).<sup>61</sup> In both cases

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<sup>57</sup> Phyllis Bober and Ruth Rubinstein, *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture: a Handbook of Sources* (London: Oxford University Press, 1986), cat. 132 and passim. Gabriele Morolli, "Archi e Capanne Due Miti Edificatori 'Estremi' nell' Immaginario Iconico dell'Era Laurenziana," in *La Toscana al tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico: Politica Economia Cultura Arte* (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 1996), 59-60.

<sup>58</sup> Filippo Coarelli, *The Column of Trajan*, trans. Cynthia Rockwell (Rome: Editore Colombo, 2000), passim.

<sup>59</sup> Nathan Whitman, "The First Papal Medal: Sources and Meaning," *The Burlington Magazine* 133, no. 1065 (1991): 820.

<sup>60</sup> Hill, cats. 740-41.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. 395.

the imagery was distinctly clerical, and for this reason it comes across as rather awkward and ill-suited for the genre.

Julius expanded the Church's iconographic repertoire within the medallic oeuvre by employing images of shepherds. Doing so in a classicizing manner, he was able to emphasize the virtues and singularity of his position without presenting ecclesiastical figures as politically insignificant in comparison to temporal rulers. The antique style and allusions in the medals not only prevented Julius from appearing marginal, but they also hinted at the pope's claim that he was the heir to Roman imperial traditions.

It is clear that papal medals often differed from the commissions of secular rulers because of the divergent nature of the positions occupied by the patrons. Julius used the format of the medal in order to articulate the virtues of the ideal ecclesiastical prince, but unlike other temporal leaders he had to shy away from martial imagery. *Condottieri* were military men and dukes were rulers, but the character of papacy was more complex and elusive. It was fraught with tension between secular and ecclesiastical duties, and thus necessitated the inventive images of shepherds, among other elements, which were not only absent in the medals of other prominent Renaissance rulers but also in classical coinage.

The very genre of the medal was charged with imperial significance. Prior to Julius, numerous other Italian princes had used medals in order to project regal images of themselves based largely on numismatic portraits of ancient emperors. By allowing his likeness to be depicted in this context, the pontiff knowingly played on these well-established monarchical associations in order to portray himself as the legitimate territorial ruler of Rome and the Papal States. Additionally, he capitalized upon the unique characteristics of his position to use his spiritual authority for political gain. Created during a period in which the papacy was attempting

to recover lost territories, and at a time when prelates were criticized for their unholy lifestyles, the combinations of words and images on both sides of Julius's medals struck a balance between strong declarations of power, and a decorous piety befitting an ecclesiastical ruler, while breaking new ground within a genre dominated by classicizing imagery.<sup>62</sup> This compromise in iconography was indicative of the precarious line the papacy needed to walk in order to regain its standing on the European political stage in the early sixteenth century.

### **Pope Julius II's Imperial Persona**

Another facet of the complex persona promoted through Julius's medals was that of imperial ruler. His portrait medals did not typically feature straightforward declarations of his right to rule Rome or the Papal States, but rather included messages couched in much subtler terms. One of the most obvious devices at his disposal was his name and the connection to his namesake, Julius Caesar, yet explicit references to the ancient statesman were largely absent in the pope's patronage. Christine Shaw keenly observed that only one inscription describing the pontiff as "Julius Caesar" has survived from all of his commissions, be they architectural, numismatic, or other media.<sup>63</sup> As discussed in Chapter 1, the lone occurrence was on a medal that was most likely commissioned by a curial flatterer rather than the pope (fig. 47).<sup>64</sup>

Julius's name might have been a reference to Pope Julius I, who was a saint and ruled during Constantine's lifetime. A nod to the early Christian cleric would have had subtle imperial

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<sup>62</sup> Numerous Renaissance figures criticized the clergy including prominent figures such as Erasmus. Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*, trans. Betty Radice (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 108-12. O'Malley, *Praise and Blame*, 195-97.

<sup>63</sup> Christine Shaw, "The Motivation for the Patronage of Pope Julius II," in *Prince and Princely Culture: 1450-1650*, Volume Two, ed. Martin Gosman (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 44. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 204.

<sup>64</sup> See text at note 136 in Chapter 1.

connotations while remaining appropriately Christian. His relics were supposedly discovered in 1510. Pope Julius II would have been familiar with Pope Julius I through the *Liber Pontificalis*, a medieval book that provided a biography of each pontiff.<sup>65</sup>

A number of titles could have easily been borrowed from ancient coinage, including “Imperator,” which was used on many imperial coins and had connotations of rulership and martial prowess. “Caesar,” or “Augustus,” which were honorific titles rather than names, were also viable options, yet they were never used in commissions by the pope.<sup>66</sup> It would have perhaps been indecorous for the successor of St. Peter to imitate pagan emperors in such a direct fashion.<sup>67</sup> The only designation borrowed from Roman imperial coinage was that of “Pontifex Maximus” or chief priest. The title was featured on the medals of several popes prior to Julius, including Paul II, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, and Alexander VI.<sup>68</sup> Its use was presumably deemed acceptable because, despite its pagan origins, it emphasized the priestly role of the patrons while still conjuring the power of the ancient empire.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Loren Partridge and Randolph Starn, *A Renaissance Likeness: Art and Culture in Raphael's Julius II* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), 62-63. Hill, cat. 874. Weiss, “Julius,” 180. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 286-87, cat. 270. *Liber Pontificalis (Book of the Popes)*, trans. Louise Ropes Loomis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916), 73-74. Kelly, 29.

<sup>66</sup> Melville-Jones, 29-30, 43-44, 98-99, 143-44.

<sup>67</sup> Robert Williams, *Art, Theory, and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy: From Techne to Metatechne* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 17-18, 88-89.

<sup>68</sup> Pontifex Maximus, or an abbreviated version of the title, appeared on the following medals, Hill, cats. 437, 751, 806, 807, 816ter, 759, 853-56, 927, and 928.

<sup>69</sup> Mary Beard and John North, *Religions of Rome: Volume I, A History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 55-56. “PP,” which was an abbreviation for *Pater Patriae*, meaning “father of his country,” was also borrowed from ancient coins and used on the coins and portrait medals of numerous Renaissance popes. The entire title, however, was never included on any Renaissance papal coins or medals and “PP” appears to have been used interchangeably with “PM,” “PONT MAX,” or other abbreviations for Pontifex Maximus. Both titles were used frequently enough by various popes that their appearance on Julius’s numismatic patronage is unremarkable. Melville-Jones, 235, 248. Francesco Muntoni, *Le monete dei papi e degli stati pontifici, Volume I* (Roma: P. and P. Santamaria, 1972), passim.

## Architecture and the Imperial Persona

Imperial connotations were present in a latent form in virtually all of Julius's medals, but one of the more prominent ways that Julius cast himself as an emperor, or at least as a powerful ruler in the mold of an emperor, was by including depictions of buildings on the reverses of medals. Architecture had been a very common subject on imperial coins but it was relatively rare in Renaissance portrait medals. Temples, fortresses, markets, triumphal arches, aqueducts, harbors, cityscapes, racetracks, and even the Colosseum appeared on ancient Roman currency.<sup>70</sup> The coins were struck in various metals and denominations over the course of hundreds of years, and they were typically paired with a portrait of the emperor on the obverse.<sup>71</sup> Advertising what had been built for imperial subjects was an efficient and legible means of expressing the benevolence and power of the emperor. Additionally, it increased the prestige of the ruler's office by publicly linking it to monumental and vaunted structures.<sup>72</sup>

Including the three medals from his cardinalate, precisely half of Julius's commissions featured buildings on the reverses. Out of these thirteen architectural medals, six different

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<sup>70</sup> Many examples exist for all of these types of architecture. Temples are the most frequently depicted type of building on Roman coinage. The images were used on coins throughout ancient world, but especially on Roman imperial coinage and Roman Provincial coinage. Kent, *passim*. For a triumphal arch see Mattingly, *Coins*, Volume II, plate 81.1. For the Colosseum see Mattingly, *Coins*, Volume II, plate 69.8. Aqueducts appeared on a few coins of the late Roman Republic, as in the Denarius with Ancus Marcius on the obverse and an aqueduct topped by a mounted image of Phillipus on the reverse. For the Phillipus Aqueduct coin see Kent, *Roman Coins*, plate cat 73. An Aureus of Claudius from AD 44-45 has a fortress-like Praetorian Camp on the reverse. Harold Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, Volume I (London, British Museum, 1923), 168, plate 31.15. Nero minted coins with the Macellum Magnum on the reverse. Mattingly, *Coins*, Volume I, 266, plate 46.6. The following books discuss the conventions involved in architecture on coinage and gives examples of the great variety of structures depicted, often in striking detail: Martin Jessop Price and Bluma L. Trell, *Coins and their cities: architecture on the ancient coins of Greece, Rome, and Palestine* (London: Vecchi, 1977), 24-74. Philip Hill, *The Monuments of Ancient Rome as Coin Types*, London: Seaby, 1989, 7-8.

<sup>71</sup> Edward Sydenham, *Historical References on Coins of the Roman Empire from Augustus to Gallienus* (San Diego: Pegasus Publishing Co., 1968), *passim*.

<sup>72</sup> Rolf Winkes, ed., *Portraits and Propaganda: Faces of Rome* (Providence: Brown University, 1989), 14, 45-105.

structures were depicted.<sup>73</sup> The prominence of architectural imagery is conspicuous considering that prior to Julius only a handful of buildings had been depicted on medals, while no single patron had more than two different buildings on the reverses of his medals.<sup>74</sup>

The inscriptions on the obverses of three of the medals label Julius as *ARCIS FVN DAT* or “Founder of the Fortress,” thereby drawing further attention to the pope’s role in ordering the construction projects.<sup>75</sup> Obverse inscriptions describing the sitter as a builder were quite rare. In the case of Julius’s commissions they may have been inspired by some of Sixtus’s medals in which the legends indicate that the pope was the “Restorer of the City” (fig. 73). The phrases *VRBE RESTAVRATA* and *VRBIS RENAVATOR* were used on a total of three of Sixtus’s medals, while *VRBE REST* appears on two of Sixtus’s silver coins.<sup>76</sup> Incorporating a reference to the patron as builder into obverse inscriptions was quite significant. Having the phrase accompany an image of the individual in a shared visual field can be understood as an attempt to make this role an essential part of the sitter’s identity.

Considering the frequency with which inscriptions referring to architecture and images of buildings were used on Julius’s medals, it seems that this content was intended to shape the perception of the pontiff by elevating him above other Renaissance princes and likening him to ancient rulers. The medals’ courtly audience would have been familiar with depictions of

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<sup>73</sup> The fortress in Ostia, the Belvedere, St. Peter’s Basilica, the fortress in Civitavecchia, the Palace of Justice, and the Basilica in Loreto were the structures depicted on Julius’s medals, although some of them were depicted on more than one medal and some of these depictions differed slightly.

<sup>74</sup> Sigismondo Malatesta commissioned several medals with his fortress in Rimini on the reverse and one medal with the Church of San Francesco on the reverse. The medal of Sigismondo by Pisanello may feature the fortress of Rocca Contrada, located near Senigallia, on the reverse, but this identification is speculative and the building is little more than a backdrop for the mounted *condottiere*. Hill, cats. 34, 174, 175, 183, and 184. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 22, cat. 12.

<sup>75</sup> Hill, cats. 224, 226, and 227.

<sup>76</sup> Hill, cats. 437, 753, and 816. Muntoni, 80, cats. 13-14.

ancient structures on imperial coinage, as these tiny antiquities were assiduously collected in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>77</sup>

Another touchstone for building as an imperial undertaking was the writing of Suetonius, among other ancient authors. Suetonius made numerous references to temples, basilicas, aqueducts, and other public works carried out under various emperors.<sup>78</sup> The learned Renaissance audience would have likely been familiar with antique literary sources in which emperors were praised for their many construction projects, thereby further establishing building as an imperial endeavor and increasing the prestige of an architectural patron.

### **Papal Attire and the Imperial Persona**

The clothing worn by the pope in some of his medals was another device used to emphasize the sitter's role as a sovereign ruler. In twenty of his portrait medals Julius was shown wearing a cope and morse, but in the other three he wore the *camauro*, a fur-lined bonnet, and the *mozzetta*, a hooded, elbow-length garment (figs. 38, 40, and 48).<sup>79</sup> The cope and morse were liturgical vestments and they had been worn in every papal medal prior to Julius's

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<sup>77</sup> John Cunnally, *Images of the Illustrious: Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 3-16.

<sup>78</sup> Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Twelve Caesars*, trans. Robert Graves (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), passim.

<sup>79</sup> Both Hill and Weiss refer to the headwear in medals the struck medal of Peace and the Belvedere medal as a "*camauro*," while they called the hat a "skull cap" when it appears in one of Caradosso's medals. There are no visual distinctions in the three medals between the hats, therefore I will refer to each of these as a "*camauro*," since this is a type of headwear reserved specifically for the pope. The term "skull cap," on the other hand, refers to a similar type of hat worn by lower-ranking clergy, although it can also be worn by the pontiff. Hill, cats. 222, 660, 876. Weiss, 170, 180.

commissions.<sup>80</sup> By contrast the *camauro* and *mozzetta* were non-liturgical vestments and Julius was the first pope depicted on the obverse of a medal wearing either of these pieces of clothing.<sup>81</sup>

No scholar has attempted to explain why the change in attire occurred or what it meant. Perhaps it was Julius's own decision to depart from the traditional formula of papal portrait medals. He was after all known to be brash, if not eccentric, and he was not afraid to flout convention, as illustrated by such occurrences as riding into battle and growing a beard during his pontificate. The variation of garments can be viewed as a visual manifestation of his rebellious personality.

Another possible explanation for the shift in attire could be that the *camauro* and *mozzetta* provided Julius with a costume that gave him an imperial air by highlighting his role as head of state, while enabling him to still appear appropriately papal. Unlike the cope and morse, which were worn during mass and other religious ceremonies, the *camauro* and *mozzetta* were worn while the pope was tending to his political and diplomatic duties, such as holding an audience or consistory.<sup>82</sup> *Pope Sixtus IV Founding the Vatican Library*, a fresco painted by Melozzo da Forlì c. 1477, depicts the pontiff meeting with his four nephews and the Vatican librarian (fig. 85). Sixtus wears the *camauro* and *mozzetta* and is regally seated in a throne-like

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<sup>80</sup> James Charles Noonan, Jr., *The Church Visible: The Ceremonial Life and Protocol of the Roman Catholic Church* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 343.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 305-08, 327-29.

<sup>82</sup> Nelson Minnich, "Raphael's Portrait 'Leo X with Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Luigi de' Rossi': A Religious Interpretation," *Renaissance Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (2003): 1005-14. For the history of the *camauro* see Egerton Beck, "The Mitre and Tiara in Heraldry and Ornament (Concluded). II-The Tiara," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 23, no. 126 (1913): 330-32. The *camauro* and *mozzetta* were not worn to administer sacraments. They were worn by bishops within their jurisdictions, providing further evidence that the garments had connotations of rulership. George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), 168-69, 280-85. Peter Fusco, "A Portrait Medallion of Pope Alexander VIII by Lorenzo Ottoni in the J. Paul Getty Museum," *The Burlington Magazine* 139, no. 1137 (1997): 872. Egerton Beck, "Ecclesiastical Dress in Art. Article IV," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 8, no. 31 (1905): 50.



chair. The scene shows a Renaissance ruler with his retinue, and ancient Roman reliefs of imperial tributes likely inspired the composition.<sup>83</sup>

In Raphael's 1511-12 *Portrait of Pope Julius II*, the pontiff yet again wears the *camauro* and *mozzetta* while seated in a chair not unlike the one depicted by Melozzo. Minimal spatial context is provided by Raphael, but the conceit is that Julius is holding an audience and the viewer is privileged to receive an up-close glimpse of the pontiff as he meets with cardinals or ambassadors (fig. 68). Loaded with imperial symbolism, Julius holds a *fazzoletto* in order to wipe his brow, but the cloth may have referred to the *mappa*, which was a sign of the emperor's authority in ancient Rome.<sup>84</sup> Both Raphael and Melozzo's paintings show sovereign figures in a political or stately setting rather than a liturgical one, and both have overtones of rulership with references to Roman imperial forbearers.

The obverses of the three medals in which Julius wears non-liturgical apparel should be read in a similar manner. The garments, never before used in the medallion context, were meant to signal his role as territorial ruler of the Papal States. Rather than continuing to reinforce the liturgical and spiritual side of the individual and the position, showing the pope in the *camauro* and *mozzetta* subtly indicated his political duties and conjured his temporal authority. It was surely no coincidence that two of these portraits appeared opposite images of architecture, while the third was paired with a scene of Peace, Justice, and Fortune. The messages to which the non-liturgical attire alluded were clarified through iconography that cast the sitter as an individual with the authority to build and govern. Furthermore, the overlap of themes in a single medal that

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<sup>83</sup> Partridge and Starn, 9-10. Isabelle Frank, "Melozzo da Forlì and the Rome of Pope Sixtus IV (1471-84)" (dissertation, Harvard University, 1991), 62-63, 112-14.

<sup>84</sup> Woods-Marsden, "One Artist, Two Sitters," 120-29.

showed Julius both as a peacemaker and an imperial figure illustrates that different personae were not always discrete entities, but instead melded into one another.

Use of a new costume on a medal allowed Julius to appear quintessentially papal without seeming overly monarchical. The *camauro* was specific to the pontiff, and it could have functioned to emphasize the singularity of his position by clearly distinguishing him from cardinals.<sup>85</sup> The hat was effective in visually differentiating Julius from this lower ecclesiastical office, since Renaissance cardinals were typically depicted in either the *biretta* or the skull cap.<sup>86</sup> Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, for example, was shown wearing the *biretta* in Titian's *Portrait of Pope Paul III and Grandsons* from 1545-46, whereas his grandfather, the pope, was depicted in the *camauro* (fig. 86).

The *camauro* was also distinct from the skull cap, as one can directly compare cardinal and papal headwear in Raphael's *Portrait of Leo X with Two Cardinals* from c. 1517-18 (fig. 87).<sup>87</sup> The skull cap worn by each of the cardinals is noticeably smaller than Leo's *camauro*. The cardinals' hats merely sit at the back of their heads without reaching anywhere near their ears or hairlines. The *camauro* is noticeably larger, extending over part of the pope's ears and covering most of his forehead, which was also the case with the depiction of Julius in all three medals in which he donned the *camauro*.

One can safely conclude that the change in attire was well received, since Pope Leo X, Julius's successor, was depicted in the same garments in one of his medals.<sup>88</sup> Additional evidence for a positive reception may be found in the fact that the *mozzetta* and *camauro* were

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<sup>85</sup> Noonan, 189. Stinger, 215-16.

<sup>86</sup> Noonan, 299-304.

<sup>87</sup> Minnich, "Raphael," 1014, 1037.

<sup>88</sup> Hill, cat. 880. Weiss, "Julius," 179.

the costume of choice for individual painted papal portraits. This tradition began with Raphael's *Portrait of Pope Julius II* and continued into the seventeenth century.<sup>89</sup>

### **Bologna and the Imperial Persona**

The most explicitly imperial message of Julius's entire corpus comes from a medal with a reverse that features a jumbled image of the enthroned pope accompanied by two figures in miters, a few spear-bearing soldiers, and the inscription VIRTVTI AVGVSTAE (fig. 45).<sup>90</sup> The epigraph can be translated as "to the august virtue." The phrase describes the pontiff as having an august nature, that is, possessing supreme dignity. The term august certainly had imperial connotations, and the inscription can more generally be interpreted as, "courage befitting an emperor." The content of the reverse allowed for an implicit comparison to the first Roman emperor without directly equating the two men.<sup>91</sup>

A number of the pope's medals subtly shaped his imperial persona, but the AVGVSTAE medal, more so than any other, directly positioned Julius as a powerful ruler. The obverse inscription cast recent political events in a manner that emphasized the pope's authority as a sovereign prince. Referring to the removal of the Bentivoglio family, it reads, IVL II P M BONONIA ATYRANO LIBERAT, "Julius II Pontifex Maximus liberates Bologna from the

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<sup>89</sup> Titian's portrait of Pope Paul III in the Museo di Capodimonte and Velasquez's portrait of Pope Innocent X in the Doria Pamphilj follow the same format as Raphael's portrait of Pope Julius II. For a general discussion of papal portraiture see Francesco Petrucci, *Papi in posa : 500 years of papal portraiture* (Rome: Gangemi, 2005), passim.

<sup>90</sup> Hill, cat. 875.

<sup>91</sup> The VIRTVTI AVGVSTAE inscription is not unlike the inscription on the reverse of Pisanello's medal of Alfonso V of Aragon that reads LIBERALITAS AVGVSTA, which means "royal generosity," but the connotations of imperial rulership are obvious considering the context. Hill, cat. 41. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 32-34, cat. 21. Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Art and Political Identity in Fifteenth-Century Naples: Pisanello, Cristoforo di Geremia, and King Alfonso's Imperial Fantasies," in *Art and Politics in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Italy: 1250-1500*, ed. Charles Rosenberg (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 17-21.

tyrant.”<sup>92</sup> Not only did the inscription commemorate the pope’s successful takeover of the city, but it also framed the deposed faction as tyrannical.<sup>93</sup> By stating that Julius rid Bologna of a tyrant, the inscription alluded to both the legitimacy and quality of his rulership, especially since it was paired with a reverse that characterized him as a virtuous, sovereign figure.<sup>94</sup> The medal reminded viewers that Julius removed the yoke of an oppressive regime so that he could rule following the example of Augustus. Positive accounts of Augustus’s reign were available in the Renaissance, including Suetonius’s *Twelve Caesars*.<sup>95</sup>

Several factors indicate that this work of art was an outlier in Julius’s corpus. It is the only medal commissioned by the pope that is attributed to Francesco Francia, and the physiognomy of the portrait stands out from the scowling faces produced by Serbaldi (figs. 58-63) and the sharp features on Gian Cristoforo’s medals (figs. 48-49).<sup>96</sup> The strong imperial references are also not found in Julius’s other medals. The content of Francia’s work was probably dictated by the unique circumstances under which the object was produced. Although all medals are portable and thus can be viewed anywhere, the obverse text referred to a specific place and event, indicating that it was originally meant for a primarily Bolognese audience. Corroborating evidence for a localized viewership can be found in two different coin

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<sup>92</sup> Hill, cat. 875.

<sup>93</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 157-59, 209-11.

<sup>94</sup> Inspired by ancient Roman sources, Erasmus, among others, describes tyranny as directly opposed to virtue. For Renaissance humanists’ views on tyranny and a virtuous ruler see Peter Stacey, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 200-02.

<sup>95</sup> Suetonius, Chapter 2.

<sup>96</sup> For comparison see Hill, cats. 866, 872, and 875.

denominations from c. 1506. Minted in Bologna and meant for use within the city, their inscriptions also mention the pope's removal of a tyrant (figs. 88-89).<sup>97</sup>

Stronger and more direct imperial claims were necessary in Julius's Bolognese commission. The pontiff's hegemony was firmly established in Rome, whereas in Bologna he was in the process of installing a new governmental power structure that answered directly to the papacy.<sup>98</sup> With a weaker grip on the city it appears that he needed to assert his authority with greater force than he had in earlier commissions. His identity was thus fashioned in a manner that more explicitly showed the pope as a mighty and virtuous leader than had his Roman commissions.

Even in these circumstances, however, Julius's assertion of his right to rule remained within the bounds of decorum.<sup>99</sup> Of course he did not call himself REX or DIVVS, as Alfonso V of Aragon had on several of his portrait medals (fig. 90).<sup>100</sup> Julius's commissions alluded to his kingly pretensions and the imagery and inscriptions on his medals created numerous parallels between the pontiff and ancient emperors. This was done more frequently and with greater force than on the medals of any of his papal predecessors. Importantly, however, none of the medals

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<sup>97</sup> The inscription on both denominations was BON P IVL A TIRANO LIBERAT, "Pope Julius liberates Bologna from the tyrant." Joseph Coffin, *Coins of the Popes* (New York: Coward-McCann, inc., 1946), 36, 55. Muntoni, 109, cats. 87, 98.

<sup>98</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 209-11.

<sup>99</sup> Williams, *Techne*, 17-18, 88-89.

<sup>100</sup> Alfonso V of Aragon did hold the title of king, or REX, but describing his as divine was rather peculiar, even within the classicizing genre of portrait medals. The following medals feature inscriptions that describe Alfonso V of Aragon as REX, DIVVS, or both: Hill, cats. 41, 42, 43, 45, 49, and 754. See also Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 32-37, cats. 21 and 23. Woods-Marsden, "Art and Political Identity," 17-19.

commissioned by Julius made any *explicit* imperial claims that had not already been made by earlier Renaissance popes.<sup>101</sup>

### **Pope Julius II's Priestly Persona**

Through the use of costume, inscriptions, and reverse imagery, some of Pope Julius II's portrait medals emphasized the priestly nature of his position. While all pontiffs are clerics and serve a spiritual role, several elements in Julius's medals were exploited in order to make this aspect of his persona more explicit. The tactic caused him to stand out when compared to his papal predecessors, but more importantly it emphasized the contrast between Julius and his princely peers ruling elsewhere in Italy and throughout Europe.

Julius was always depicted in clothing appropriate to the office of the papacy. As previously mentioned, in twenty of his medals he was shown wearing a cope and morse, and in the other three he wore a *camauro* and *mozzetta*. The cope and morse were liturgical vestments, and they had been the costume of choice in every papal medal commissioned before Julius's pontificate.<sup>102</sup> The ecclesiastical function of this attire highlighted the sitter's priestly role, and since the clothing was specific to the papacy, it emphasized the sitter's position as the leader of Western Christendom. The shared dress accentuated the notion that Julius was part of an unbroken chain of popes stretching back to St. Peter. By using the same attire as his predecessors the images anticipated viewers' expectations for a numismatic portrait of a pope

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<sup>101</sup> The theoretical foundation for papal claims to imperial power are clearly articulated by Stacey, although not all of these claims are explicit in papal portrait medals. Stacey, 80-81.

<sup>102</sup> Noonan, 343. Ferguson, 168-69, 280-85.

and made the sitter seem fittingly papal. Even the *camauro* and *mozzetta*, discussed above as imperial, still allowed the sitter to appear papal, and thus priestly.<sup>103</sup>

One accessory that was conspicuously absent from Julius's medallic portraits was the papal tiara. The ostentatious headwear was a potent symbol of the sovereignty and universal power of the papacy.<sup>104</sup> The tiara, or *triregno*, was a triple crown, with each layer representing a different aspect of the pope's authority. The first crown symbolized his power as Vicar of Christ and head of all of Christianity, the second stood for his jurisdictional supremacy, and the third represented his temporal power.<sup>105</sup> The tiara was not without its drawbacks. It functioned as a lightning rod, and it drew criticism from cardinals and humanists in the Roman Curia, as when Paul II ignored medieval strictures and began wearing his new, gem-encrusted *triregno* during liturgical functions. Bartolomeo Platina, for example, remarked that the headwear made Paul look like a "turreted Cybele."<sup>106</sup>

I argue that the absence of the tiara in Julius's portrait medals was a sign that he was attempting to cultivate an image of his own person that was not overly monarchical. A medallic portrait of a pope wearing the tiara would not have been new, as both Paul II and Sixtus IV had been depicted with the crown on some of their medals (fig. 72).<sup>107</sup> The elder Della Rovere, who was a frequent model for Julius's artistic patronage, was rendered wearing the tiara in the

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<sup>103</sup> Noonan, 305-08, 327-29.

<sup>104</sup> Prodi, 46. Beck, "Mitre and Tiara," 330-32.

<sup>105</sup> Alternate explanations for the tripartite symbolism have been put forward, including militant, penitent, and triumphant, as well as priest, pastor, and teacher. Noonan, 189. Stinger defines the three powers as sacerdotal, regal, and imperial. Stinger, 215-16. Stacey, 80-81.

<sup>106</sup> Stinger, 215-16.

<sup>107</sup> Hill, cats. 776, 777.

majority of his portrait medals.<sup>108</sup> Julius, however, was infamous for his impiety and love of secular pomp, and he may have eschewed the tiara in his medallic portraiture in an attempt to divorce himself from this reputation. To my knowledge the only large-scale images of the pope wearing his crown were the portrait of Julius in the scene of *Justice* in the Stanza della Segnatura (fig. 11) and the recumbent portrait of the pope atop his tomb (fig. 91). Extenuating circumstances may explain each of these works of art, as the former was actually a depiction of Julius in the guise of Pope Gregory IX, while the latter was sculpted by Michelangelo many years after the pontiff's death.<sup>109</sup>

Avoiding the *triregno* in portraits also enabled Julius to display his tonsured head. The tonsure could be worn by any cleric, and it was a well-known symbol of divine service. That it was viewed as such during the Renaissance can be observed in, among other places, Erasmus's *In Praise of Folly*, written in the early sixteenth century. Erasmus conjured the image of the tonsure as a reminder that clerics should be concerned with holy matters instead of the material world.<sup>110</sup> That Julius was depicted wearing this "priestly crown," rather than the papal tiara, can be understood as an attempt to contradict his reputation for impiety and perpetuate an image of religious devotion.<sup>111</sup> The apparent refusal to be shown on a medal wearing the tiara runs

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<sup>108</sup> Four of Sixtus's six medals show the pope wearing the tiara. One of the portraits in which the tiara is absent was commissioned by Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere, so in reality Sixtus commissioned only one medal in which he does not wear the tiara. Hill, cats. 437, 751, 753, 806, 807, and 816ter.

<sup>109</sup> Shaw, "Patronage," 43-61. Some portraits of Julius in manuscripts show him wearing the tiara, although these were not seen by large audiences. Weiss, "Julius," cats. 33d and 33e. Ingrid Rowland, "The Vatican Stanze," in *The Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 109. Johannes Wilde, "The Tomb of Julius II," in *Michelangelo: Six Lectures* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 110-13. John Symonds, *The Life of Michelangelo* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 128-44. Michael Hirst, *Michelangelo: The Achievement of Fame, 1475-1534* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 199-208.

<sup>110</sup> Erasmus, *In Praise of Folly*, 111.

<sup>111</sup> Catholic Encyclopedia, "Tonsure," accessed December 10, 2013, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14779a.htm>.



counter to everything known about Julius's domineering personality and obsession with papal authority, yet it reinforces the idea of a portrait as a fiction.<sup>112</sup>

Closer analysis of the circumstances surrounding Julius's rise to power may help explain the iconography of his portraits. Whereas Sixtus, who embraced the tiara in his medallic portraits, took office after only a short period as a cardinal and lacking strong political allies, Julius was elected after having spent decades in the College of Cardinals. He had wielded significant power during his uncle's papacy as well as during the reign of Pope Innocent VIII, Sixtus's successor.<sup>113</sup> Julius spent much of the last quarter of the fifteenth century establishing diplomatic ties with various European courts and accumulating benefices and bishoprics.<sup>114</sup>

By the time he was elected pope, Julius's personal image was virtually the opposite of Sixtus's. Upon his election Sixtus was praised for his piety, while Julius was criticized for his rash temperament and failure to live a priestly lifestyle.<sup>115</sup> His time spent on diplomatic missions away from Rome, however, afforded him the opportunity to see how the papacy was viewed from outside the curia.<sup>116</sup> Such insight may have affected iconographical choices in his medallic portraits. Unlike Sixtus, who was politically vulnerable at the start of his papacy, Julius did not have the pressing need to assert authority in conjunction with images of his person. I propose

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<sup>112</sup> The pope even commissioned Caradosso to make a new tiara, so it was not for lack of a real crown or lack of interest in the accouterment that Julius was shown with a bare head. Clifford Brown and Sally Hickson, "Caradosso Foppa (ca. 1452-1526/27)," *Arte Lombarda* (1997): 10. Loren Partridge, *The Art of Renaissance Rome, 1400-1600* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), 12-13.

<sup>113</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 51-79. On the role of Cardinal Giuliano and other *nipoti* during Sixtus's reign, see Christine Shaw, "A Pope and His Nipote: Sixtus IV and Giuliano Della Rovere," in *L'Età dei Della Rovere: Parte Prima* (Savona: Società Savonese di Storia Patria, 1988), 233-50.

<sup>114</sup> On Julius's relations with Avignon and Savona, see Henry Dietrich Fernandez, "Avignon to Rome: The Making of Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere as a Patron of Architecture," in *Patronage and Dynasty: The Rise of the Della Rovere in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Ian Verstegen (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2007), 63-72.

<sup>115</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 438-39.

<sup>116</sup> Shaw, "Patronage," 50-51.

that Julius was attempting to downplay an air of impiety and regality by having himself depicted with an attribute of a devout priest instead of with a conspicuous symbol of papal imperialism.<sup>117</sup>

The notion of Julius deemphasizing imperial aspects of his persona may appear to contradict other elements in his medals that were intended to highlight his role as a head of state and successor to the emperors of ancient Rome. It is important to note, however, that the corpus of medals did not function as a cohesive unit. Features in one commission could conflict with those in a medal created by another artist working in a different context. Even within a single medal the construction of a persona required balancing various elements that reflected the sitter's personality and position in order to meet the goals of the patron. All of this had to be accomplished while remaining within the bounds of what was acceptable to a Renaissance courtly audience.

Another important factor that must be considered is the relationship between the two sides of a medal and how they may have been read by Cinquecento viewers. Imperial references were consistently transferred away from the person of the pope on the obverses, thereby allowing them to be manifested in the iconography of the reverses. The relationship between medallic obverses and reverses is a topic about which scholars have not reached unanimous agreement. The sides of a medal enabled visual separation of the two images intended to represent the sitter. Elena Corradini stated that the public aspect of the sitter was illustrated on the obverse while the internal or individual characteristics were represented on the reverse.<sup>118</sup> I object to Corradini's claim, as the genre was courtly and therefore semi-public, as opposed to domestic and private. Due to the intended audience, both sides of the medal must be understood as representing public

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<sup>117</sup> Woods-Marsden, "One Artist, Two Sitters," 139-40.

<sup>118</sup> Elena Corradini, "Medallic Portraits of the Este: *effegies ad vivum expressae*," in *The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance*, eds. Nicholas Mann and Luke Syson (London: British Museum Press, 1998), 22.

aspects of the sitter. The persona that was the product of the medal might seem to provide an intimate depiction of the patron, but it was carefully crafted with the purpose of being shown to a courtly audience of diplomats, humanists, and prelates, as well as other rulers.

As far as Julius's medals are concerned, I propose some separation in meaning between the two sides, yet I fully acknowledge that they were united in a single object. The portraits and inscriptions on the obverses were meant to reflect Pope Julius II Della Rovere, the individual who occupied the throne of St. Peter at a specific time. The obverses by definition were specific to Julius as they depicted his facial features in a unique and recognizable manner. All of these portraits were labeled with inscriptions that included his name and title, and several of them were further personalized with the phrase *IVLIVS II LIGVR*, referring to Julius's Ligurian origins.<sup>119</sup> The words and images on the reverses were less individualizing, and I propose that they were meant to represent the office of the papacy in a more general sense, although they were undoubtedly still connected to Julius. They often included depictions of buildings owned by the Holy See or generic personifications of virtues. Only one reverse included the Della Rovere coat of arms and it was probably not commissioned by Julius (fig. 47), while none of the reverse inscriptions mentioned the pope by name.<sup>120</sup>

Due to the intimate connection between the obverse of a medal and the individual depicted, many of the stronger imperial references were reserved for the reverses of the pope's medals, while the costume, tonsure, and inscriptions on the obverses alluded more directly to Julius's ecclesiastical role. The relationship between content on obverses and reverses could be fluid, and a number of priestly references appeared on the reverses of his medals. As discussed

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<sup>119</sup> Hill, cats 222, 228, 445, 659-61, 866-69, 872, 873, and 877.

<sup>120</sup> The medal with the Della Rovere coat of arms was the "Julius Caesar" medal that was most likely commissioned by someone other than the pope. Hill, cat. 874.

above, shepherds were featured on three of the pope's commissions (figs. 43, 61-62).<sup>121</sup> These images not only cast him as a peacemaker, but also as a pastoral and spiritual figure distinct from other Renaissance princes.

A medal created by Camelio in 1506 struck a similar thematic chord due to its inclusion of religious content (fig. 44). It featured the following inscription on the reverse: PASCITE QVI IN VOBIS EST GREGEM DEI, "Feed the Flock of God which is Among You."<sup>122</sup> The legend was from 1 Peter 5:2 and it circumscribed an image of the pope kneeling before an enthroned Christ while St. Peter handed his keys to Julius.<sup>123</sup> Since it was not commissioned by the pope, but was instead struck as a showpiece by Camelio, it only reflected his agenda in an indirect manner.<sup>124</sup> Considering that Camelio was attempting to ingratiate himself with the pope's inner-circle, the medal can be read as the artist's attempt to anticipate Julius's needs and desires. The iconography and inscription were therefore not completely divorced from the type of content that Julius would have wanted. Unlike the trite and amateurish work on the Julius Caesar medal, which was also not commissioned, Camelio was a skilled medalist who could more effectively predict the needs of a potential patron.

The Venetian artist offered a clever twist on established papal iconography.

Enthronement scenes had been featured on the medals of Paul II, Sixtus IV, Alexander VI, and

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<sup>121</sup> Hill, cats. 228, 229, and 661.

<sup>122</sup> The plural imperative, *Pascite*, is used to address the audience in the inscription. Hill, cat. 445. Alan Stahl, "Mint and Medal in the Renaissance" in *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, ed. Stephen Scher (New York, Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), 139.

<sup>123</sup> The full passage reads as follows: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking care of it, not by constraint but willingly, according to God: not for filthy lucre's sake but voluntarily," *Pascite qui in vobis est gregem Dei, providentes non coacte, sed spontanee secundum Deum; neque turpis lucri gratia, sed voluntarie.*

<sup>124</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 171.

even on Julius's AVGVSTAE medal (fig. 45).<sup>125</sup> In each of these works of art the pope was seated on a throne attended by other figures, whereas in Camelio's scene Julius was the one beseeching an enthroned Christ with St. Peter as an intercessor. Rendering Julius as the supplicant instead of the dominant figure caused him to appear humble and pious, while his proximity to the divine significantly elevated his spiritual stature. Sixtus had been shown on the reverse of a medal seated between St. Francis and St. Anthony (fig. 92), but Camelio's scene was unprecedented.<sup>126</sup> It was the first medallic image to show a pope alongside Christ, and to my knowledge it was the first Renaissance depiction in any medium of a living pope interacting with Christ. It differs from earlier images in which a pope was positioned as a donor passively observing a mystical occurrence.<sup>127</sup> Importantly, Julius actively participates in Camelio's narrative, which shows Christ blessing the pope and making eye contact with him as St. Peter gives keys to the kneeling figure. The scene may have been inspired by papal coins from the Quattrocento that showed the pope genuflecting before St. Peter (fig. 93).<sup>128</sup>

The medal illustrates power through piety, and it was carried out not by way of abstract symbols representative of the papacy, but through a rendering of the individual. The minute image of Julius on the reverse was only his surrogate, yet it provided a more direct connection

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<sup>125</sup> The following medals depict enthroned pontiffs: Hill, cats. 761bis, 765, 766, 807, 853, and 875.

<sup>126</sup> Hill, cat. 807.

<sup>127</sup> One such example is in the Borgia Apartments in the Vatican where Alexander VI is the donor in a scene of the Resurrection. Here the pope observes the Resurrection, but he is marginalized in the same way as donors in Renaissance paintings. Thomas Dandeleit, *Spanish Rome: 1500-1700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 24-35.

<sup>128</sup> These coins were actually inspired by Venetian coins with the doge kneeling before St. Mark. Muntoni, 68, cat. 3.

with his person than would have an emblem such as a shepherd or a patron saint.<sup>129</sup> Signs such as these diluted the qualities he was striving to embody, and they would have reflected only some of his papal characteristics. Semiotically speaking, by employing an icon resembling the pope rather than a symbol with only conventional meaning, the artist asserted a more direct connection between Christ and the pontiff.<sup>130</sup> Through Camelio's scene Julius's person was invested with religious power in accordance with Church doctrine.<sup>131</sup> The artist created what is arguably the most explicit visual articulation of the papacy's claim to spiritual supremacy in all of Renaissance art. Such a powerful statement was presumably only possible because of the medal's highly restricted viewership.

Julius's sanctity is evident through his proximity to the divine, and this same religious tone is echoed in the inscription. The wording used to construct his power was taken from the New Testament rather than from a civic or classical source. The text and image fortified Julius's pious and priestly persona by casting him as an intermediary between Christ and humanity. The illusion of his personal presence on the reverse closely linked these characteristics to the individual, which was the ultimate goal of a medal.

A broader view of Julius's corpus indicates that his priestly persona was further crafted through the barrage of religious subject matter found in his medallion commissions. Six of Julius's twenty-three medals included Bible verses, and a biblical scene was illustrated on two

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<sup>129</sup> Further discussion of the articulation of the pope's role in the Renaissance can be found in O'Malley, *Praise and Blame*, 221-22.

<sup>130</sup> Hatt and Klonk, 208-10. Bal and Bryson, 188-90.

<sup>131</sup> O'Malley, *Praise and Blame*, 220-28. Brian Tierney, *Origins of Papal Infallibility: 1150-1350* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 22-25, 238-51. Over the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries the pope shifted from being called the "Vicar of Peter" to the "Vicar of Christ." Paravicini-Bagliani, 58-59.

medals.<sup>132</sup> Two different churches were also depicted on a total of six of his medals.<sup>133</sup>

Additionally, Julius had three medals of shepherds, while Camelio's showpiece depicted the pope in the same space as Christ. This constitutes an extraordinary amount of religious content for a medium that was primarily secular in nature, even for ecclesiastical patrons.

Only two medals commissioned by Julius's papal predecessors featured religious iconography, while none of them had biblical inscriptions. Paul II had a medal with an image of St. Peter and St. Paul (fig. 94), and Sixtus IV had a medal with an image of St. Anthony and St. Francis (fig. 92).<sup>134</sup> Most papal medals included personifications of classical virtues, heraldic emblems, or depictions of architecture. The remarkable quantity of spiritual content on Julius's medals indicates a coordinated attempt by the patron and his advisers to surround the pontiff with sacred imagery in order to counter his reputation as an impious and domineering monarch.

### **Pope Julius II as Divine Messenger**

The religious content of the pope's medals served functions beyond that of simply highlighting his spirituality. As an ecclesiastical figure Julius could not establish a powerful, martial presence in the same manner as a secular prince. In order to convey personal might his messages were couched in a language of sanctity, and in doing so a number of the medals positioned the pontiff as the messenger of God. Julius repurposed scriptural passages to suit his political agenda, thereby creating the impression that he was a conduit for the divine.

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<sup>132</sup> Hill, cats. 445, 866, 867, 873, 874, and 877.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., cats. 659, 660, 868, 869, 870, and 871.

<sup>134</sup> For Pope Paul II's medal, see Hill, cat. 760. For Pope Sixtus IV's medal, see Hill, cat. 807.

One medal that furthered this goal included a reverse with an inscription from the book of Ezekiel.<sup>135</sup> The text encircled a scorpion and the constellation, Scorpio (fig. 69).<sup>136</sup> Struck by Gian Cristoforo Romano in 1511, it presumably addressed the Council of Pisa, which began on November 5 of the same year, under the zodiacal sign represented on the medal.<sup>137</sup> The biblical and astrological references in the artwork imply the pontiff's close connections to both the divine and the cosmos, while framing his opponents as heretics. At this time the Council of Pisa was attempting to dethrone the pope, and I propose that the Scorpion medal was struck in response to the anti-Petrine efforts that were directly supported by the king of France.<sup>138</sup> If this hypothesis is correct, it would not have been the only work of art that Julius commissioned to rebuke the French for their attacks on the Church.

Raphael's fresco of the *Expulsion of Heliodorus*, which is located in the Papal Apartments in the Vatican, has also been interpreted as a warning to King Louis XII (fig. 16). It was executed from 1511-12, the same period during which the Scorpion medal was struck. The fresco depicts an Old Testament story in which the Temple of Solomon was miraculously protected by a divine, mounted warrior and two armed youths. The defenders of the holy site repelled Heliodorus, an agent of the Syrian King, who was attempting to abscond with the sacred

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<sup>135</sup> John Sawyer, "Ezekiel in the History of Christianity," in *After Ezekiel: Essays on the Reception of a Difficult Prophet*, eds. Andrew Mein and Paul Joyce (New York: T and T Clark, 2011), 1-10.

<sup>136</sup> Hill, cat. 873. The full Bible verse reads, *Dic ad eos: Vivo ego, dicit Dominus Deus, nolo mortem impii, sed ut convertatur impius a via sua, et vivat. Convertimini, convertimini a viis vestris pessimis; et quare moriemini, domus Israel?*, "Say to them: As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: and why will you die, O house of Israel?" The entire verse is not included on the reverse. The medallion inscription actually omits the reference to the House of Israel. The following phrase is what appears on the reverse: NOLLO MORTEN PECATORIS SED MAGIS CONVERTATVR ET VIVAT, "...I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live..."

<sup>137</sup> Eugenio Garin, *Astrology in the Renaissance: The Zodiac of Life* (London: Routledge, 1983), 8-20.

<sup>138</sup> Minnich, "Image of Julius II," 79-82. Chambers, 126. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 291-92.



treasure. Both the medal and the painting assert divine retribution against the Church's enemies. The fresco communicated the notion that St. Peter's Basilica would be protected by the Almighty, as had been the case with the Temple of Solomon in the biblical passage.<sup>139</sup>

The medal sent a more complex message. The inscription stated, "I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live." On the surface, the phrase appears to convey a sense of forgiveness, but in the context of the medal the tone is much more accusatory. It casts the opponents of the Church as heretics while positioning the pontiff as the righteous messenger of God. Considering that the epigraph is accompanied by an image of a poisonous creature associated with heresy, the viewer is forced to interpret the reverse as a stern warning aimed at the pope's enemies.

A further parallel between the painting and the medal is that both commissions employed portraits of Julius, thereby linking the person of the pope to the respective threat. In Raphael's fresco Julius is raised high in a litter, stoically surveying the scene from the periphery (fig. 67), and on the obverse of the medal he is depicted in strict profile, reminiscent of the portraits on so many Roman imperial coins (fig. 3).<sup>140</sup> Expressing agency on behalf of the pontiff, it was as if his presence provided a Petrine blessing. In each case the pope is not shown actively issuing a threat, as this would have spurned further criticism from Julius's enemies. Instead it is meant to appear as if he effortlessly allows God's will to take its course. This non-violent, divinely-sanctioned stance was fitting for the pope, and politically expedient, considering the fact that his active participation in warfare was widely condemned by such writers as Guicciardini.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Rowland, "Vatican Stanze," 111-12. Sylvie Béguin and Cristiana Garofalo, *Raffaello: catalogo completo dei dipinti* (Santarcangelo di Romagna: Octavo, 2002), 131.

<sup>140</sup> Rowland, "Vatican Stanze," 112.

<sup>141</sup> Guicciardini, Book IX, Chapter XIII.

The very notion of employing a medal to communicate a threat runs counter to the primary function of the genre. Typically a portrait medal highlighted the virtues and accomplishments of the sitter.<sup>142</sup> The winged-eye on the reverse of Leon Battista Alberti's medal, for example, was the humanist's personal emblem (fig. 95). Although rather cryptic, it was meant to positively reflect the sitter's wisdom and erudition.<sup>143</sup> Ruler medals functioned in a similar manner, as in Pisanello's work depicting Sigismondo Malatesta on horseback, which was intended to commemorate his victories on the battlefield and advertise his skills as a *condottiere* (fig. 77).<sup>144</sup> The same was true of the vast majority of Julius's medals. The shepherd medals, for example, alluded to the pontiff's role as the protector of Christ's flock, while the architectural medals commemorated and advertised his accomplishments as a builder.<sup>145</sup> In sharp contrast, however, the Scorpion medal was not a projection of an ideal self-image or a means of commemorating an accomplishment, rather it was an active attempt to issue an antagonistic message. Conjoining the pope's portrait to a negative emblem rather than a positive one was essentially a reversal of the function of a traditionally laudatory genre.

Numerous scriptural passages mention scorpions, and in each instance the associations are negative.<sup>146</sup> The creatures stand for heresy, danger, pain, and death, and they represent

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<sup>142</sup> Stephen Scher, ed., *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance* (New York: Abrams, 1994), 14-15.

<sup>143</sup> Hill, cat. 161, Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 58-59. Keith Christiansen, Stefan Weppelmann, eds., *The Renaissance Portrait: From Donatello to Bellini* (New York: Yale University Press, 2011), 192-93.

<sup>144</sup> Hill, cat. 34. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 22-23.

<sup>145</sup> Hill, cats. 228-29, 659-61.

<sup>146</sup> Scorpions are mentioned nine times in the Bible. They can be found in Third Book of Kings 12:11 and 12:14, Second Book of Paralipomenon 10:14, Ecclesiasticus 39:36, Ezekiel 2:6, Luke 10:19, and John 9:3 and 9:10.

obstacles over which the righteous must triumph.<sup>147</sup> The injurious connotations of the image must have been intended by the artist since scorpions were mentioned in same book from which the medal's inscription was drawn. Ezekiel 2:6 reads, "...thou art among unbelievers and destroyers, and thou dwellest with scorpions."<sup>148</sup>

Luke 10:19, a rare instance of a New Testament reference to scorpions, discussed how followers of Christ had the authority to trample upon these venomous pests.<sup>149</sup> As the leader of Western Christianity the pope may have been invoking biblical precedent to illustrate his power over alleged heretics. The image also functioned as a visual manifestation of the evil forces that Julius would conquer. The prominent use of iconography with such patently undesirable qualities indicates the artist's novel manipulation of numismatic components.

Use of astrological symbolism in the medallic context was quite unusual as well. Prior to Julius's commission only one medal out of the hundreds produced throughout the Quattrocento and early Cinquecento featured a sign of the zodiac, while the scorpion medal was the first to depict a constellation. A work dating to 1498 with Virgo and Sagittarius on the reverse was created for Isabella d'Este by Gian Cristoforo Romano, the same artist who made Julius's scorpion medal (fig. 96).<sup>150</sup> The rarity of the subject in medals was possibly due to how astrology was regarded by Renaissance humanists.

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<sup>147</sup> For a recap of generally negative connotations of the beast see Luigi Aurigemma, *Il segno zodiacale dello Scorpione nelle tradizioni occidentali dall'antichità greco-latina al Rinascimento* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1976), 89-103.

<sup>148</sup> The full verse of Ezekiel 2:6 reads, "And thou, O son of man, fear not, neither be thou afraid of their words: for thou art among unbelievers and destroyers, and thou dwellest with scorpions. Fear not their words, neither be thou dismayed at their looks: for they are a provoking house."

<sup>149</sup> Luke 10:19 reads, "Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall hurt you."

<sup>150</sup> Hill, cat. 221. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 136-37. Christiansen and Weppelmann, 239-41. A medal cast in 1474 had the general subject of astrology, but it was not a constellation or astrological sign. Hill, cat. 501.

Francesco Petrarchscathingly condemned the practice in the mid-Trecento when he wrote, “Leave free the paths of truth and of life...These globes of fire cannot be guides for us...we have no need of these swindling astrologers and lying prophets who empty the coffers of their credulous followers of gold, who deafen their ears with nonsense.”<sup>151</sup> Later humanists’ views on astrology were divided. In the final quarter of the fifteenth century Marsilio Ficino wrote about astrology in a positive light in *The Book of Life*, and he also acted as the personal astrologer for Lorenzo de’ Medici.<sup>152</sup> During this same period, however, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, offered a powerful denunciation of the practice in his pointedly-titled *Treatise against Astrology*. Pico despised the notion that a man’s fate was determined by the stars rather than by free will.<sup>153</sup>

One of the strongest humanist supporters of astrology was the Neapolitan, Giovanni Pontano, a contemporary of both Ficino and Pico. He attempted to justify astrological practices through his writings, specifically with regards to the issue of free will.<sup>154</sup> Although it was widely practiced in Renaissance Italy, the mere fact that Pontano found it necessary to rationalize astrology indicates that the field was by no means universally embraced, especially within humanist circles.

Regarding the Scorpion medal, it is important to determine precisely how the astrological imagery operated within the work of art. Perhaps the most specific function was as a marker of

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<sup>151</sup> Francesco Petrarch, *Rerum senilium libri (Letters of Old Age)*, trans. Aldo Bernardo, Saul Levin, and Reta Bernardo (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), Book I.6. Garin, 8.

<sup>152</sup> Garin, 4, 46, 64-65. Marsilio Ficino, *The Book of Life*, trans. Charles Boer (Irving, TX: Spring Publications, 1980), viii-xi, 38, 156, 160-61. Janet Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art: Pontormo, Leo X, and the two Cosimos* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 160.

<sup>153</sup> Garin, 4. Charles Trinkaus, “The Astrological Cosmos and Rhetorical Culture of Giovanni Gioviano Pontano,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (1985): 448, 460, 463.

<sup>154</sup> Pontano wrote *De rebus coelestibus* in the final quarter of the Quattrocento, which is discussed at length in Trinkaus, 448-52.

time and means of commemorating a particular occurrence, which in this case was the start of the Council of Pisa. Precedent for such a function can be found in Quattrocento Florentine art where pictorial horoscopes had been used to commemorate events and suggest that they had been astrologically predetermined. This occurred in the painted cupola of the Old Sacristy in San Lorenzo, which featured a depiction of the stars as they appeared in the sky above Florence in July during the early fifteenth century (fig. 97). The dome has been interpreted as commemorating the date of consecration for the church's high altar, which occurred on July 9, 1422.<sup>155</sup> A similar use of stars was featured in one of Pope Julius II's commissions. Raphael's fresco of *Astronomy with the Celestial Globe* in the Stanza della Segnatura shows the constellations positioned such that they resemble the autumn sky, which has led some scholars to conclude that the image was meant to commemorate Julius's election in October 1503 (fig. 98).<sup>156</sup>

An additional layer of astrological meaning may have been implied in the medal, as Scorpio was strongly associated with Mars, the god of war. A series of planetary rulerships, which were developed in antiquity and were well known in the Renaissance, held that a number of pagan gods controlled two zodiacal constellations. Under this rubric Mars ruled Scorpio and Aries.<sup>157</sup> Mars, however, was further linked to Scorpio through ancient astrological poetry. These literary works were known to, and drawn upon by Ficino, among others. A system of guardianships that assigned pairs of Olympian gods to opposing signs of the zodiac had also been recovered from ancient sources, and it was exploited by Renaissance humanists in

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<sup>155</sup> Another interpretation is that it commemorates July 6, 1439, which was the closing day of the Council of Ferrara and Florence. Cox-Rearick, 166-67.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 162-63.

developing artistic programs. Within the system Venus and Mars were the protectors of Taurus and Scorpio.<sup>158</sup>

Janet Cox-Rearick, who has written extensively on astrological imagery in the Renaissance, asserted that viewers were expected to grasp cosmological metaphors coded in works of art.<sup>159</sup> Based on the connections between Mars and Scorpio, I suggest that a threatening message was further implied by the presence of an emblem linked to the god of war. Moreover, the reference was most likely obvious to the erudite audience for whom the medal was intended.

The Scorpio constellation on the medal may have had a broader metaphorical meaning as well. Circumscribed by a Bible verse and located opposite a portrait of the leader of Western Christianity, the astrological sign could have been intended to indicate the pontiff's close connection to forces controlling the cosmos as well as his unique role as the Vicar of Christ on Earth.<sup>160</sup> As a spiritual leader and successor to St. Peter, the celestial imagery, so rare in the medallic context, would have signaled his privileged place in relation to the divine.

A similar type of interconnection between the Christian spiritual realm and the cosmos is visible in the cupola of the Chigi Chapel, painted by Raphael in the years immediately following the creation of the Scorpion medal (fig. 99). The chapel is located in the Roman church of Santa Maria del Popolo and was commissioned by a high-ranking cleric with close ties to the

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 168-69.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>160</sup> Woods-Marsden, "One Artist, Two Sitters," 120-24. Grosseteste as cited by Woods-Marsden, 124. Prodi, 6-17.

papacy.<sup>161</sup> It shows God the Father surrounded by planets and stars that are personified as the pagan deities with whom they have been associated since antiquity.<sup>162</sup>

Although they have gone unnoticed by modern scholars, the astrological references on the reverse of the Scorpion medal were certainly meant to be accessible to sixteenth-century viewers. Most of the stars fall along the spine of the scorpion, which causes them to be somewhat obscured by the creature's body. However, the artist carefully rendered the stars that make up the pincers against the open field of the reverse, causing them to be much more conspicuous than they would be if they had been positioned atop the animal's claws. While the correct number of stars in the constellation has been depicted, their placement is not entirely accurate.<sup>163</sup> Gian Cristoforo moved a number of the heavenly bodies away from their correct locations on the tail and thorax, and he clustered them near the pincers. Ultimately the artist sacrificed accuracy for legibility to ensure that the viewer noticed the stars and was able to decipher the zodiacal reference.

The Scorpion medal is truly a virtuoso work of art. Exploiting the tiniest details, from the markers between words to the precise placement of stars within the field, Gian Cristoforo Romano illustrated his mastery, both of the medium, and of his ability to visually articulate a political message. Not only does the object communicate a stern warning, but it also expresses a more subtle idea of erudition and sophistication on behalf of the patron. The fact that the medal featured numerous numismatic innovations is evidence that Julius was a patron with avant-garde

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<sup>161</sup> Marcia Hall, "The High Renaissance, 1503-34," in *Artistic Centers of the Italian Renaissance: Rome*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 130-31.

<sup>162</sup> Cox-Rearick, 162-63.

<sup>163</sup> The number of stars in the constellation varies depending on the source, but the Scorpion medal appears to have sixteen, which is typical for most diagrams. The placement, however, is unlike any other medieval or Renaissance rendering of Scorpio, as the stars are never clustered on the claws. Several medieval and Renaissance depictions of Scorpio are available in Aurigemma, 142, 143, 185.

tastes. Although the pontiff is most famous for his grandiose endeavors, the Scorpion medal indicates that even his smallest commissions broke new ground and helped shape High Renaissance art.

A reverse image by Serbaldi, also from late in Julius's pontificate, featured an adapted portion of a Bible verse employed in a similar manner as that on the Scorpion medal. An excerpt of Acts of the Apostles 26:14 accompanying an image of the Conversion of St. Paul was used on two different medals (figs. 65-66). The inscription reads, *CONTRA STIMVLVM NE CALCITRES*, "Do not kick against the goad."<sup>164</sup> In the context of the scriptural passage the words were spoken by Jesus. This agency is apparent in the medal since the inscription is positioned directly below a depiction of an airborne figure of Christ knocking a soldier off of his horse. Importantly, however, both the image and inscription are affixed to a likeness of the pontiff. By quoting Christ opposite a portrait of Julius, the pope was again positioned as the messenger of God. As the viewer reads the phrase it is attributed to Jesus, while also functioning as the voice of the pope. The work of art is constructed in such a manner that the pontiff is an intermediary between humanity and the divine.

The pope, or whoever specified the wording of the inscription, took the liberty of adapting it in order to emphasize the admonitory aspect of the message. The actual verse reads, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," but on the medal it has been changed to "Do not kick against the goad."<sup>165</sup> Through the altered phrasing a warning was manufactured in order to fit a scene that was more violent than any other featured on Julius's medals.

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<sup>164</sup> The wording is slightly altered in the inscription and it can refer either to Acts 9:5 or Acts 26:14.

<sup>165</sup> Acts 26:14 reads, *Durum est tibi contra stimulum calcitrare*, but for the medal it was changed to *contra stimulum ne calcitrare*.



The inscription does not directly describe the image so much as it highlights a principle that the viewer is supposed to notice. Scholars have proposed that the medal commemorated the excommunication of Alfonso I d'Este, the pope's enemy.<sup>166</sup> If this were true then it would explain the combative tone of the reverse. It was not simply an illustration of a New Testament story, but a concerted effort to assert the pope's spiritual power and indicate that it was effective against martial forces. Producing the medal in conjunction with Alfonso's excommunication would have been a reminder of the real-world effects of the pope's unparalleled religious authority. Like the Scorpion medal, the work of art would have been a rare example of a Renaissance portrait medal being used to issue a threat. It was also among the first instances of a passage from the Bible being illustrated on the reverse of a medal.<sup>167</sup> The novelty of the subject matter is yet another indication that the pope and his advisers were willing to transgress the boundaries of the genre in order to achieve their political goals.

The Conversion of St. Paul reverse was paired with two different obverses designed by Serbaldi. The likenesses are generally similar except for one major difference: Julius is bearded in one of the images (figs. 65-66). This medal is significant not only because it was the first papal medal to depict a bearded sitter, but it was also among the first from the entire corpus of Renaissance medals to portray a subject with a beard.<sup>168</sup>

The issue of the pope's beard was more than a fashion statement. From the late Middle Ages and into Julius's papacy facial hair was fraught with negative meaning and was "symbolic

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<sup>166</sup> Graham Pollard, *Italian Renaissance Medals in the Museo Nazionale of Bargello: 1400-1530* (Firenze: SPES, 1984), 362. Weiss, "Julius," 179.

<sup>167</sup> The Judgment of Solomon is possibly illustrated on a medal of René D'Anjou. Hill, cat. 52.

<sup>168</sup> A number of the first medals with bearded sitters either portrayed Christ or foreigners such as Emperor Palaeologus or Sultan Mehmed II. Through the end of Julius's reign Italians were still rarely depicted with beards. Hill cats. 19, 39, 432.

of the multitude of sins.”<sup>169</sup> A number of decrees by the Latin Church from the eleventh through the fifteenth centuries specifically prohibited clergymen from growing beards. By the middle of the second decade of the sixteenth century, however, beards appear to have been accepted in much of Europe. Baldassare Castiglione, the epitome of the courtly gentleman, wears one in his 1515 portrait by Raphael, and Pope Clement VII was bearded the following decade.<sup>170</sup>

That the leader of Western Christianity would have grown facial hair and had it depicted on a portrait medal at a time when there was a stricture against ecclesiastical beards is significant. The inclusion of a bearded likeness of the pontiff was yet another example of how Julius, or whoever was making the decisions regarding the imagery on his numismatic commissions, was willing to diverge from the established conventions of papal portrait medals.

A portrait is a construction, and verisimilitude was only one factor considered when the artist and patron were devising these works of art. Referring to coin portraits, Luke Syson observed that an image of a ruler sometimes remained the same throughout his career. He convincingly argued that portraits were typically updated at key political moments, and they did not necessarily mimic real-life changes in a prince’s physiognomy.<sup>171</sup> Due to the successive steps required to bring a medal from initial design to finished product, it is likely that Julius or a member of his inner circle approved the radical, bearded image.<sup>172</sup> This indicates that it was a significant aspect of the person that he was attempting to perpetuate.

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<sup>169</sup> Mark Zucker, “Raphael and the Beard of Pope Julius II,” *Art Bulletin* 59, no. 4 (1977): 526. Douglas Biow, “The Beard in Sixteenth-Century Italy,” in *The Body in Early Modern Italy*, eds. Julia Hairston and Walter Stephens (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 525.

<sup>170</sup> Zucker, 524-26, 532. Biow, 176-85.

<sup>171</sup> Syson, “Circulating a Likeness,” 118-19.

<sup>172</sup> On the design and production of Italian Renaissance medals, Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, XV-XVII.

As a courtly genre the portrait medal was intended for intimate viewings by select audiences. Control over such circumstances was made possible by the small size and valuable material of which medals were composed. Woods-Marsden suggested that it was the very predictability of the audience that encouraged artists and patrons to occasionally ignore decorum and experiment with the iconography of medals, and this may have been part of the motivation for Serbaldi's bearded image of Julius.<sup>173</sup>

This medallic portrait was likely created with the intention of being shared with the pope's allies. If the beard functioned as a visible sign of his resolve to expel the French, as discussed in the previous chapter, then the best way to communicate such resolve would have been through the "authority of the likeness."<sup>174</sup> One can imagine courtiers and princes handling the object and discussing the meaning of Julius's bearded visage. The portrait could have conjured images of great men from history ranging from St. Peter, who was always depicted with a beard, to Julius Caesar. Suetonius reported that Caesar was clean-shaven, except after one military defeat, at which point he grew a beard until the loss was avenged.<sup>175</sup>

Coupled with the biblical yet militaristic imagery of the conversion of St. Paul, the medal may have been intended as a call to arms by the pope. If the bearded image of Julius was supposed to channel St. Peter, which is reasonable considering his grizzly appearance on the medal, it would have complemented the religious content on the reverse, which was borrowed from a New Testament passage. Donning the mask of the first pope enabled him to personally appear as an agent of the divine, thereby fortifying his persona as a messenger of God.

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<sup>173</sup> Woods-Marsden, "Visual Constructions of the Art of War: Images for Machiavelli's Prince," in *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, ed. Stephen Scher (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000), 48.

<sup>174</sup> Brilliant, 23. For a discussion of Pope Julius II's beard, see text at note 192 in Chapter 1.

<sup>175</sup> Suetonius, 42, I.67. Zucker, 527.

Furthermore, employing a biblical inscription on the medal created an implied union between Julius and the Almighty that was absent in commissions featuring strictly secular content.

## **Conclusion**

The genre of portrait medals allowed the pope to assume many roles and alter his identity in ways that were impossible with large-scale, permanently fixed commissions. Exploiting every nuance of the medium, Julius was able to transform his public image in order to suit his political circumstances. The various personae that I have identified—peacemaker, imperial ruler, priest, and divine messenger—frequently overlapped and functioned in a complementary manner, while on other occasions they contradicted one another. The lack of consistency should not be interpreted as a failure on the part of Julius or his artists. Such versatility instead illustrates the adaptability of medals, and it indicates the shrewdness of a patron who was able to harness the strengths of the preeminent courtly genre in order to serve his needs.

The divergent representations of the pontiff point to the constructed nature of the personae. They were not reflections of truth, but instead they indicated his intentions, goals, and desires.<sup>176</sup> The different sides of the pope presented in this corpus reveal the fictitious and, as Berger would put it, conspiratorial nature of the works of art.<sup>177</sup> The variety of personae is evidence of their inherent artificiality. They were crafted to fit the patron's largely political needs. The medals functioned on one level to make the sitter simply appear stately and papal. More specifically, however, they allowed the head of state to personify the specific principles

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<sup>176</sup> Although I began the chapter by disagreeing with Woods-Marsden's assessment of the character of portrait medals, I largely agree with most of her claims. The intentions, goals, and desires of a patron are not too different from their "fantasies, illusions, and pretensions." Woods-Marsden, "Castles," 132.

<sup>177</sup> Berger, "Fictions of the Pose: Facing," 89-90.

that he was claiming to perpetuate through his reign. In doing so he became the embodiment of his message and his message was embodied in his person.

### CHAPTER 3

#### Forging an Empire: Architectural Medals of Pope Julius II

Architecture appeared more frequently on the reverses of Pope Julius II's medals than did any other subject. As discussed in the previous chapter, half of Julius's medals featured images of buildings on the reverses. Not all of the structures depicted were completed, but the interest in architecture in the medallion realm did reflect the real renovations being undertaken in and around the Eternal City.

Compared to other Italian urban centers, Rome was a dilapidated backwater at the beginning of the Renaissance. It had suffered from decades of neglect due to feuding barons, the absence of the pope during the so-called Babylonian captivity, and the Schism of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.<sup>1</sup> The renewal of the fabric of the Roman cityscape began in earnest with the patronage of Pope Nicholas V shortly after his election in 1447. Among his many projects were a renovation and expansion of the crumbling St. Peter's Basilica, as well as the creation of broad avenues leading from the Castel Sant'Angelo to the Vatican. Nicholas understood both the practical and political importance of architectural commissions. According to Giannozzo Manetti, the pope's posthumous biographer, the ailing pontiff stated on his deathbed that he built not for personal glory, "but for the greater authority of the Roman church and the greater dignity of the Apostolic See."<sup>2</sup> While other popes followed suit by pursuing various construction projects, it was Julius who truly embraced the spirit of Nicholas's legendary pronouncement. With the help of his lead architect, Donato Bramante, he began

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<sup>1</sup> Meredith Gill, "The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, in *Artistic Centers of the Italian Renaissance: Rome*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 27, 44-46.

<sup>2</sup> Christoph Frommel, "Papal Policy: The Planning of Rome during the Renaissance," in *Art and History: Images and Their Meaning*, eds. Robert Rotberg and Theodore Rabb (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 40-41.

building on a scale not seen since imperial Rome, and in the process he dramatically increased the political power of the papacy.

The pontiff commissioned a series of portrait medals celebrating new structures that were part of his extensive building program. Copies of many of the medals were buried in the foundations of the structures they commemorated, while others were distributed to high-ranking prelates, diplomats, and nobles associated with the papal curia. This chapter explores Julius's medallic patronage as it relates to his architecture, and it focuses on how the medals were meant to be perceived by the pope's contemporaries as well as by future audiences.

The first medal Julius commissioned after his election depicted Bramante's Vatican Belvedere (fig. 38).<sup>3</sup> The work is by an unknown medalist and was probably executed in 1504.<sup>4</sup> Besides serving as a multi-tiered garden, arena for spectacles, and courtyard for antique statues, the *Cortile del Belvedere* provided a passageway from the Vatican Palace to the Belvedere Villa, a suburban estate commissioned by Pope Innocent VIII in 1485.<sup>5</sup> Prior to Bramante's construction, the pope and his entourage had to traverse more than 300 m of exposed and uneven terrain in order to pass from the palace to the villa.<sup>6</sup> By annexing the villa, the papal palace was expanded to the scale of a princely residence, which suited Julius's extraordinary ambition (fig. 24).

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<sup>3</sup> George Francis Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini, Volume 1* (London: British Museum, 1930, reprinted, Florence: SPES, 1984), cat. 876. Roberto Weiss, "The Medals of Pope Julius II (1503-1513)," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 180-81.

<sup>4</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 181. According to an inscription on the site work began in the first year of Julius's pontificate. Christoph Frommel, *Architettura alla Corte Papale nel Rinascimento* (Milano: Electa, 2003), 91-92.

<sup>5</sup> James Ackerman, *The Cortile del Bevedere* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1964), 49, 192.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, eds, *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), 508. Millon and Lampugnani's translation is somewhat strange. ADITVVM means approaches or entrances and this seems to be ignored by the scholars.

The inscription on the reverse of the medal reads, VIAIVLIIIADITLONMALTILXXP VATICANVS M, which has been construed as, VIAIVLIATRIVMADITVVMLONGITVDINISMILLEALTITVDINISSEPTVAGINTAPEDVM VATICANVS MONS. The Latin translates to, “The Passageway of Julius was extended three miles in length and 70 feet in elevation, Mount Vatican.”<sup>7</sup>Text was successfully exploited in order to evoke the grandeur of antiquity within the tiny format. By mentioning the colossal dimensions, the artist obviated the medal’s size while clearly communicating the Belvedere’s incredible proportions.

Christoph Frommel argues that the inscription alludes to the pope’s imperial pretensions through a reference to Suetonius’s discussion of Nero’s impressive passageway-cum-palace. The structure was destroyed in antiquity, but it supposedly stretched from the Palatine to the Esquiline Hill.<sup>8</sup> The image on the reverse of the medal depicts the entire courtyard, but the inscription emphasizes the notion that it is a corridor. Whether or not the Neronian reference was clear to a viewer of the actual Belvedere, it was intended to be understood by someone viewing the hand-held work of art.

The passageway and epigraph were not the only aspects influenced by princely models from antiquity. The system of terraces and stairways was inspired by the Temple of Fortuna in Palestrina, believed in the early Cinquecento to have been the palace of Julius Caesar (fig. 100).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Millon and Lampugnani, 508.

<sup>8</sup> Referring to Nero, Suetonius said, “He built a palace, stretching from the Palatine to the Esquiline, which he called ‘The Passageway’; and when it burned down soon afterwards, rebuilt it under the new name of ‘The Golden House.’” Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Twelve Caesars*, trans. Robert Graves (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 229, VI.31. Christoph Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2007), 102-03.

<sup>9</sup> Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 103. David Karmon, *The Ruin of the Eternal City: Antiquity and Preservation in Renaissance Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 82-83.



The architectural quotation indicates that Julius was presenting himself not simply as the bishop of Rome, but as the true successor to the Pontifex Maximus.

On the most basic level the Belvedere medal represents Julius's desire to commemorate works of architecture in numismatic form even before a competent medalist had joined his court. The anonymous artist rendered the pope in an uninspired fashion, and his depiction of Bramante's truly spectacular courtyard falls flat. The medalist may not have been hired again, but the practice of using medals to commemorate buildings continued. Conjoining the pope's likeness with images of structures he commissioned, the medals provided Julius with a relatively inexpensive means of commemorating and advertising the significantly more expensive acts of architectural patronage. These portable and reproducible works of art allowed Julius's allies near and far to admire the permanently fixed commissions, and they enabled the pontiff to frame the buildings with clearly delineated messages in the inscriptions.

### **St. Peter's Basilica and Papal Authority**

One of the driving forces behind Julius's political agenda was his desire to expand papal authority and create an empire with wide-reaching temporal and religious dominion, and the same motives spurred his building campaigns. He envisioned himself and future popes ruling the Papal States while standing on par with other European monarchs.<sup>10</sup> Prior to Julius taking office, however, the Holy See was vulnerable to internal and external pressures. Perugia and Bologna had fallen into the hands of local factions, while the Venetians were encroaching on the Church's territories in the Romagna.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Arnaldo Bruschi, *Bramante* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1977), 12-13, 148-49.

<sup>11</sup> Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 127-59.

Julius understood that in order to bolster the Church's power, the Vatican and the whole of Rome needed to reflect his grandiose conception of papal authority.<sup>12</sup> While the *Cortile del Belvedere* was still under construction, Julius continued his building program, focusing resources on a project with both practical and symbolic importance, and one that truly reflected his vision for a Universal Church. As early as 1505 the pope commissioned Bramante to renovate and expand St. Peter's Basilica.<sup>13</sup> Reconstruction of the church proved to be a difficult and convoluted project. It lasted for well over a century and employed many of the greatest architects of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.<sup>14</sup>

As mentioned above, Pope Nicholas V, not Julius II, first endeavored to overhaul the sagging Constantinian structure. He had commissioned Bernardino Rossellino to build an expanded choir for St. Peter's in 1451, but construction continued for just three years and the new walls only reached the height of 7.6 m.<sup>15</sup> In 1452 Leon Battista Alberti presented his architectural treatise, *De re aedificatoria*, to Nicholas, and in it he included a dire assessment of the basilica's structural stability. Alberti stated, "I have noticed in the Basilica of St. Peter's in Rome a crass feature: an extremely long and high wall has been constructed over a continuous series of openings, with no curves to give it strength, and no buttresses to lend it support...the

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<sup>12</sup> Nelson Minnich, "The Image of Julius II in the ACTA of the Councils of Pisa-Milan-Asti-Lyons (1511-12) and Lateran V (1512-17)," in *Giulio II: Papa, Politico, Mecenate*, ed. Giovanna Rotondi Terminiello and Giulio Nepi (Genova: De Ferrari and De Vega, 2005), 79-90, 84-86. Christine Shaw, "The Motivation for the Patronage of Pope Julius II," in *Prince and Princely Culture: 1450-1650*, Volume Two, ed. Martin Gosman (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 43-61. Charles Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 235-39.

<sup>13</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 145-56. Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 104.

<sup>14</sup> Timothy Verdon, *La Basilica di San Pietro: I papi e gli artisti* (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 2005), 62-136.

<sup>15</sup> Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 48. Frommel, "Papal Policy," 41.

continual force of the wind has already displaced the wall more than six feet from the vertical; I have no doubt that eventually some gentle pressure or slight movement will make it collapse.”<sup>16</sup>

Nicholas’s successors made virtually no progress on either the repair or the expansion of St. Peter’s, as most of them focused their efforts on family palaces and churches.<sup>17</sup> It was not until the early Cinquecento that the project caught the papacy’s attention. Julius decided to renew efforts to dramatically enlarge, and eventually replace the late-antique basilica with a new structure that synthesized a number of classical models.

As lead architect under Julius, Bramante began where Rossellino had left off, but the plan quickly and continuously mutated.<sup>18</sup> Over the century it was altered from a Latin Cross to a Greek Cross plan and back again, among other reasons, to accommodate Michelangelo’s freestanding tomb of Julius.<sup>19</sup> Bramante was not the only architect to work on St. Peter’s in the early Cinquecento. Giuliano da Sangallo questioned the structural integrity of Bramante’s design. He submitted a rival plan around the autumn of 1505 with more substantial piers to support the enormous dome (fig. 101).<sup>20</sup> On the recto of Giuliano’s drawing is yet another

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<sup>16</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykert (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1988), 26. Gill noted that Alberti meant that the walls were leaning approximately 5’9”. Gill, 103, note 91.

<sup>17</sup> Frommel, “Papal Policy,” 41-51.

<sup>18</sup> Looking at Uffizi drawing 3A, Bramante clearly began from Rossellino’s plan. Christoph Frommel, “St. Peter’s: The Early History,” in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture*, eds. Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), 399-402. Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 105. Christof Theones, “Renaissance St. Peter’s,” in *St. Peter’s in the Vatican*, ed. William Tronzo (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 64-92.

<sup>19</sup> Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 105. Ascanio Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, trans. Alice Sedwick Wohl, ed. Hellmut Wohl (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 30-33.

<sup>20</sup> Frommel, “St. Peter’s,” 408.

design that has been attributed to Bramante (fig. 42). His plan, presumably in response to that of his adversary, featured a longitudinal layout and a large ambulatory.<sup>21</sup>

Plans continued to change after the death of Julius in 1513 and Bramante in 1514, as other patrons and architects imposed their own agendas on the gargantuan basilica.<sup>22</sup> Despite design fluctuations, the laying of the foundation stone occurred on April 18, 1506, and two medals were created by Caradosso Foppa for this momentous occasion (figs. 1 and 40).<sup>23</sup> Several copies of the medals were placed in the foundations of the basilica, while others were distributed to high-ranking prelates and diplomats close to the pope.<sup>24</sup>

Prior to 1506 a number of buildings throughout Italy had been celebrated on the reverses of portrait medals. Sigismondo Malatesta of Rimini had both his fortress and church depicted on the reverses of medals, Pope Paul II commissioned medals with his Roman palace on the reverses and, among others, Pope Sixtus IV had an image of the Ponte Sisto on one of his portrait

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<sup>21</sup> Lex Bosman, "The Dilemma of Pope Julius II: How to Preserve the Old St. Peter's While Building a New St. Peter's," in *Aux Quatre Vents: A Festschrift for Bert W. Meijer* (Firenze: Centro Di, 2002), 40-41. Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 105-07.

<sup>22</sup> For an overview of plans following Julius's death, see Frommel, "St. Peter's," 413-23.

<sup>23</sup> Weiss, "Julius," 169-70. Hill, cats. 659, 660.

<sup>24</sup> As quoted by Hill, cat. 660, J. Burckardus, *Liber notarum* (Muratori, *Rer. It. Scr.*, xxxii, 2 (1913), p. 509: *Postquam papa posuit ipsum lapidem, muratores posuerunt in quodam vase cooperto duas medaglias aureas valoris ductorum L, et XI vel plures de metallo cum facie pape in capucino, ab una parte, ab alia designation (sic) edificii, prout est in ea quam accepi.* "After the pope placed the stone, he put in a certain covered vessel, gold medals in the value of fifty ducats, and eleven more copies of the medal with the face of pope in the cappuccino habit on one side, and on the other side, an image of the building, as it is on those things [medals] that I have received." As quoted by Hill, cat. 660, Paris de Grassis (Muratori, *ibid.*, p. 510, n. I, correctis corrigendis): *Quidam faber argentarius...attulit XII monetas novas sive madallias latas sicut est una ostia misse communis, grossas vero sicut costa unius gladioli communis; et ab una parte erat imago pape Julii cum his litteris, videlicet: JVLIVS LIGVR SECVNDVS PONTIFEX MAXIMVS ANNO SVI PONTIFICATVS MDVI, et ab alia erat forma temple sive edificii quod volebat erigere, cum litteris his, videlicet: INSTAVRATIO BASILICE APOSTOLORVM PETRI ET PAVLI PER JVL II PONT MAX et inferius erat hoc verbum videlicet: VATICAN.* "A silversmith...brought twelve new coins or medals as broad as the ones commonly used for the mass doors but as thick as a common sword; and on one side was an image of Pope Julius with an inscription that says: JVLIVS LIGVR SECVNDVS PONTIFEX MAXIMVS ANNO SVI PONTIFICATVS MDVI, and on the other was an image of the building or structure that he planned to erect, with this inscription, namely: INSTAVRATIO BASILICE APOSTOLORVM PETRI ET PAVLI PER JVL II PONT MAX, and below it said: VATICAN."

medals.<sup>25</sup> The depiction of a church on the reverse of a medal, however, was actually quite rare when Julius commissioned the medals of St. Peter's. From the entire corpus of Italian medals, only Sigismondo's medal of San Francesco in Rimini pre-dates the Caradosso medals (fig. 102).<sup>26</sup> I propose that there was a tacit prohibition against the sort of extreme personal identification between a patron and a place of worship that was conjured in the imagery of a portrait medal with a church on the reverse. In Sigismondo's case, he had commissioned significant renovations to and decoration of the church precisely for his own glorification. Although he was far from the only Renaissance patron to have his personal and familial symbols included in church decorations, San Francesco is one of the more extreme instances of self-glorification. The church was encrusted with Malatesta imagery, including Sigismondo's own zodiacal sign hovering over a depiction of Rimini in the nave.<sup>27</sup>

Thus as noted, Caradosso's medals of St. Peter's (figs. 1 and 40), commissioned approximately half a century after Matteo de'Pasti's medal of Sigismondo and San Francesco, were only the second and third Renaissance portrait medals with a church on the reverse. One certainly would have suspected a medal for at least one of Alberti's churches, perhaps Sant'Andrea in Mantua, considering the strong antiquarian and humanist tendencies of the

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<sup>25</sup> Sigismondo's medals of the fortress and church, Hill, cat. 163, 183. Paul II's medals of the Palazzo Venezia, Hill, cat. 780, 783. Sixtus IV's medal of the Ponte Sisto, Hill, cat. 806.

<sup>26</sup> A medal of Filiasio Roverella, Archbishop of Ravenna, has a church on it and it might date to the first decade of the sixteenth century, but its exact date is unknown. Hill, cat. 1062. A medal by Sperandio of Francesco I Sforza shows a design of a chapel, possibly related to a design by Filarete, but the structure was never executed and it could just be a representation of an ideal burial chapel. Graham Pollard, Eleonora Luciano, and Maria Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: Volume One, Italy, The Collection of the National Gallery of Art, Systematic Catalogue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 111, cat. 94. Hill, cat. 361. One other possible example is a medal of Pope Paul II with the tribune of St. Peter's on the reverse. The image, however, does not show an entire building, only on part of the interior of a structure, thus it does not really fall into the category of medals of churches. Hill, cat. 764.

<sup>27</sup> Pier Giorgio Pasini, "Matteo de'Pasti: Problems of Chronology and Style," *Studies in the History of Art* 21, (1987): 143-59.

architect and the patron, not to mention Alberti's ties to medalists.<sup>28</sup> As many of his and other patrons were laymen rather than prelates, perhaps they were unwilling to have their portraits appended to an image of a church for fear of appearing to usurp ecclesiastical authority, especially if they were closely allied with the papacy.

The depiction of Julius and St. Peter's on opposite sides of a medal can be interpreted as an attempt to position the basilica as his own palatine chapel. Plans for the basilica had already been drastically altered to make room for his colossal funerary monument that was to be placed prominently in the choir.<sup>29</sup> The medals may have been intended to help foster a personal connection between Julius and the massive church. It would have reminded viewers of other princely chapels while further articulating the pope's imperial aspirations. Similar regal chapels with which viewers of the medal would have probably been familiar include the Palace Chapel of Charlemagne in Aachen, the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, and even the temple of Apollo on the Palatine Hill, which was closely associated with the Emperor Augustus.<sup>30</sup>

A church was a fitting emblem for a ruler such as Julius, whose power was based primarily on religious claims rather than on heredity or military might. Pairing his portrait with an image of a basilica obviously evoked the spiritual authority of the papacy. A similar use of numismatic iconography can be found centuries earlier on a coin of Charlemagne that features a portrait of the Holy Roman Emperor opposite that of a generalized rendering of a church (fig.

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<sup>28</sup> Alberti made a medal-like plaquette of himself. He was also depicted on a medal by Matteo de'Pasti, with whom he corresponded. Pasini, 145-49.

<sup>29</sup> Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 105. Condivi, 34.

<sup>30</sup> For a brief discussion of Charlemagne's chapel and Sainte-Chapelle see Henry Luttikhuisen and Dorothy Verkerk, *Snyder's Medieval Art* Second Edition (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2006), 165, 364-66. For a discussion of Augustus's house on the Palatine, its connection to the Temple of Apollo, and knowledge of the two buildings in ancient sources, see Filippo Coarelli, *Rome and environs: an archaeological guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 140-42.

103).<sup>31</sup> The rudimentary image of the building functioned to emphasize Charlemagne's connection to the institution that he was charged with protecting. Associations between power, person, and Church would have been even more potent in the case of the pope.

The St. Peter's medals were presumably intended to evoke Julius's personal authority, and they were also meant to promote the power and prestige of the papacy. The basilica was depicted on a heavily rusticated and rocky ground, and I propose that the image itself was a visual metaphor intended to recall the biblical authority on which the power of the papacy was based.<sup>32</sup> The passage from the Gospel of Matthew, cited in the previous chapter, states that Christ described Peter as the rock on which he would build his Church.<sup>33</sup> Papal ideology posited an unbroken chain of rulers leading from the sitting pope, back through history, directly to St. Peter, and through St. Peter to Christ. Claims to Petrine supremacy were still current in the Renaissance, as the bull *Laetentur Coeli* from the Council of Florence and Ferrara explicitly stated, "the Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and that he is the true Vicar of Christ."<sup>34</sup> Certainly the reference to the rock of Peter on the reverse of the medal would have been obvious to even the least clever Cinquecento viewer.

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<sup>31</sup> Timothy Verdon, *L'Arte Cristiana in Italia: Origini e Medioevo, Vol. I* (Milano: San Paolo, 2005), 166-67.

<sup>32</sup> The use of rocky ground was not simply a numismatic convention as other architectural medals from the period employed different motifs. The church on Matteo de'Pasti's medal of Sigismondo Malatesta and San Francesco was not located on any ground. The building instead appears to float the reverse. Hill, cat. 183. Grass rather than rocks are clearly depicted beneath the fortress on Matteo de'Pasti's medal for Sigismondo and his castle in Rimini. Hill, cat. 184. Sperandio's depiction of a building on Giovanni d'Orsinio de' Lanfredini's medal is rendered on a sort of smooth pavement rather than on rocks. Hill, cat. 377.

<sup>33</sup> Matthew 16:18-19, "Thou art Peter [Petrus]; and upon this rock [petram] I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." *Et ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam, et portae inferi non praevalent adversum eam. Et tibi dabo claves regni caelorum. Et quodcumque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum in caelis; et quodcumque solveris super terram, erit solutum in caelis.* Stinger, 161.

<sup>34</sup> Quote from Stinger, 164.

The form of the image on the reverses of the St. Peter's medals embodied the specifically Julian ideology of the pope ruling over a Universal Church. Such a conception of the papacy required an imposing edifice like the one Bramante was planning.<sup>35</sup> The depiction of the new basilica in medallic form can best be described as monumentality on a miniature scale. St. Peter's was rendered so as to overwhelm the reverse of the medal. The two towers pass in front of the text that circumscribes the medal while the church sits dramatically on the edge of a cliff. There is an implied heroic scale reminiscent of the colossal structures of imperial Rome. Bramante is said to have characterized his design as consisting of the Pantheon on top of the Temple of Peace from the Roman Forum.<sup>36</sup> This description implied that he intended not just to equal the ancients, but to surpass them. The grand ambition of both the pope and the architect was quite evident in Caradosso's image, as the cascading domes and pediments outdo even the greatest architectural feats of ancient Rome.

The rocky ground was not the only symbolic form on the medals' reverses. Bramante's plan for St. Peter's called for an enormous church, possibly with a central plan, which was to be capped with a large dome and four smaller domes (fig. 25).<sup>37</sup> Although the ground plan is unclear on the medals, the hemispherical domes were represented prominently, as four of them are visible even in these small images. Both the central plan and the dome were valued for their symbolism in the Renaissance. In *De re aedificatoria*, Alberti praised these forms, saying, "*Nature delights primarily in the circle. Need I mention the earth, the stars, the animals, their*

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<sup>35</sup> Ludwig Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), trans., Frederick Antrobus (London: Butler and Tanner, 1923), 465.

<sup>36</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 466. Marie Tanner, *Jerusalem on the Hill: Rome and the Vision of St. Peter's in the Renaissance* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2010), 54-69.

<sup>37</sup> The other half of the church was a mirror image of this figure. Bruschi, *Bramante*, 145-57. Peter Murray, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), 132-35.



*necks, and so on, all of which she has made circular? ”<sup>38</sup> The conspicuous placement of the round architectural elements in Caradosso’s image successfully reflected Julius’s desire for a structure that could serve as a locus of imperial and ecclesiastical power from which the pontiff could rule his Christian empire.*

The format of the medal provided a practical yet elegant means by which Julius was able to communicate various messages about St. Peter’s to his contemporaries, including his extreme notions of papal authority. The easily transportable works of art also functioned as tangible signs of the daring architectural undertaking. Renaissance theorists such as Filarete suggested using three-dimensional models to illustrate what a completed building would look like. Models, however, were often extremely large and virtually immovable, thus limiting the scope of viewers. A surviving model of St. Peter’s from 1539-46 is so large that one can actually walk inside of the scaled-down structure.<sup>39</sup> By contrast, medals could be distributed to members of various courts so as to present an idealized depiction of a construction project that would not be completed for decades. The St. Peter’s medals allowed Julius to demonstrate his grand vision and rebut criticism directed at him and the controversial project.

The plan to demolish Old St. Peter’s and replace it with a new basilica came under heavy scrutiny by many of Julius’s contemporaries, including members of the College of Cardinals and others in the papal curia. The Constantinian-era church had served as the seat of Western Christendom for over a millennium, and it was arguably the most important pilgrimage destination in Europe. Housing shrines to numerous saints, many people not only believed it was sacrilegious to destroy it, but they were also skeptical that it could be rebuilt on the scale of the

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<sup>38</sup> Alberti, VII.4.

<sup>39</sup> Henry Millon, “Models in Renaissance Architecture,” in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture*, Henry Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, eds. (New York: Rizzoli, 1994), 35-40. Millon and Lampugnani, 635-36.

original basilica.<sup>40</sup> Even in a culture that did not value the preservation of historical structures in the same way we do today, Julius was fighting deep-rooted sentiment to see the original building salvaged.<sup>41</sup>

Bramante's actions were deemed particularly reprehensible. He earned the nickname "Ruinante" for his habit of destroying buildings to make room for his own.<sup>42</sup> His seemingly insatiable appetite for destruction was an infamous part of his legacy, as can be observed in a 1517 satirical dialogue by Andrea Guarna. The text featured a discussion between Bramante and St. Peter that took place outside the gates of heaven. The author lampooned Bramante by having him ask St. Peter if he would allow him to destroy the pathway to heaven and build a broad road in its place. In response the Apostle accused Bramante of destroying his church, and he would not allow him into heaven until its replacement was completed.<sup>43</sup>

Another point of attack was the extraordinary magnificence of the endeavor. Raffaele Maffei, a curial humanist active in the late Quattrocento and early Cinquecento, characterized the rebuilding of St. Peter's as an unnecessary distraction for the papacy. He went as far as to compare Julius to the Emperor Tiberius. Although his opinion did not dominate Renaissance

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<sup>40</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 469-71. The literature on the reconstruction of St. Peter's is extensive. Articles by a number of prominent art and architectural historians can be found in Cristiano Tessari, ed., *San Pietro che non c'è* (Milano: Electa, 1996), passim.

<sup>41</sup> The issue of the destruction of ancient Roman sculpture and monuments is addressed in Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past: Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 30-35. Renaissance Romans were not in favor of the wholesale destruction of antiquities and some laws were enacted to protect ancient monuments, but their views towards altering and destroying antique art and architecture are diametrically opposed to twenty-first-century views. Christian, 212-13.

<sup>42</sup> Rowland, *Culture*, 173. Millon and Lampugnani, 510. Karmon argues that Julius and Bramante were in fact concerned with the destruction of Rome's cultural treasures, despite their willingness to tear down buildings. He points to the greater restrictions placed on excavations in Rome during Julius's reign. Karmon, 80-88, esp. note 20.

<sup>43</sup> Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 460-70. Stinger, 80.

thought, Maffei was certainly not alone in believing that elaborate building programs and the conspicuous display of wealth contributed to moral decay in the Church.<sup>44</sup>

It is in light of these critiques that Caradosso's medals should be analyzed (figs. 1 and 40). The image of a classicizing basilica on the reverse of the medals may have been intended to allay fears that Julius was ruining one of the most sacred sites in Christendom. The medals could have deflected criticism by offering hope that the new structure would be much more glorious than the decaying pastiche of late-antique and medieval architecture that it would be replacing. Lex Bosman suggested that the use of *spolia* provided continuity between the new basilica and the old one. Not only would *spolia* have functioned as a free and easily accessible source of building material, but it would have also provided a means by which a completely new church could carry on the tradition of the early Christian basilica. By reusing visible elements such as columns and bases, for example, Julius could be presented not as a destroyer but as a restorer.<sup>45</sup> The idea of restoration was echoed in the medals' reverse inscription, which reads, *TEMPLIPETRI INSTAVRACIO*, "The Renewal of the Temple of St. Peter," with *VATICANVSM* or "Mount Vatican" in the exergue.<sup>46</sup> The epigraph was clearly intended to communicate the idea that Julius was not destroying an old church and replacing it with a new one, but rather imbuing the original with new life.

Two additional medals of St. Peter's were created with reverses based closely on Caradosso's design (figs. 56-57).<sup>47</sup> Although admittedly speculative, the striking of additional

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<sup>44</sup> John D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism*, 123, 222. John D'Amico, "Papal History," 157-210.

<sup>45</sup> Bosman, "Dilemma," 43. Lex Bosman, *The Power of Tradition: Spolia in the Architecture of St. Peter's in the Vatican* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2004), 82-112.

<sup>46</sup> Hill cats. 659, 660.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, cats. 870, 871.

medals could have been prompted by the beginning of a new phase of construction of St. Peter's. Work began in 1506 and parts of the old choir were torn down in April 1507. The four arches that were to support the dome had been erected by 1511. The smaller St. Peter's medals could easily have been produced within this timeframe to commemorate the building of the piers or some other crucial element of the basilica. They would have potentially buoyed spirits and helped focus the efforts of high-ranking prelates and other powerful figures involved in a difficult construction project plagued by high costs and fluctuating plans.<sup>48</sup>

The production of four different medals for a single church reflects the paramount importance of the undertaking as well as the intense determination of the patron. Considering the vast scale, high profile, and great symbolism of the church, failure of the project would have spelled disaster for Julius's papacy. The basilica was viewed as the throne of the Prince of the Apostles.<sup>49</sup> It is not surprising that the pontiff invested so many resources into his vision for St. Peter's. Had the endeavor not succeeded, Julius would have been remembered as the destroyer of the seat of papal power.

### **The Medals of St. Peter's: Addressing the Future**

The College of Cardinals and various courtiers did not comprise the entire audience for the pope's medals of St. Peter's. Copies of Caradosso's medals were deposited in the foundation of the basilica as construction began in 1506, presumably so that they would be discovered by future generations.<sup>50</sup> Julius was not the first patron to partake in this practice, as numerous

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<sup>48</sup> Frommel, "St. Peter's," 412-13, note 58.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 399.

<sup>50</sup> See note 24 in this chapter for full details on the laying of the foundations.

Quattrocento rulers had inserted medals into the fabric of their buildings. They did so both in emulation of the ancient Roman custom of placing coins in foundations and in an attempt to perpetuate their reputations for eternity.<sup>51</sup>

The Renaissance sculptor Filarete described his contemporaries' motivations when he wrote, "When the time comes, they [future generations] will find these things [medals], and through them they will remember us and know our names, just as we remember [the Romans] when we find some noble thing in an excavation or a ruin; we hold it dear and are pleased to have found a thing that represents antiquity and [gives] the name of them who made it."<sup>52</sup>

Votive deposits of coins were indeed made on occasion in ancient Rome. As discussed in Tacitus's *Histories*, "gold and silver virgin coins, never melted in the furnace, but still in their natural state," were placed in the foundations of the new Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline in AD 70.<sup>53</sup> Most ancient coins discovered in the Renaissance, however, were more likely individual coins that had been lost by accident, or hoards that had been buried but never recovered by their original owners.<sup>54</sup>

The antique coin hoards were buried for safekeeping, often in ceramic vessels. Many of them were presumably mistaken for ceremonial deposits when they were unearthed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Mimicking what they believed was an antique practice, Renaissance patrons placed medals into pots before interring them in the walls or foundations of

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<sup>51</sup> Minou Schraven, "Out of sight," 190-92.

<sup>52</sup> Quoted from Joanna Woods-Marsden, "How quattrocento princes used art: Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta of Rimini and *cose militari*," *Renaissance Studies* 3, no. 4 (1989): 401.

<sup>53</sup> Schraven, "Founding Rome Anew," 144-45. Tacitus, *The Histories*, trans. Kenneth Wellesley (New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 1995), 4.53.

<sup>54</sup> Richard Reece, "Interpreting Roman Hoards," *World Archaeology* 20, no. 2 (1988): 261-62. Christopher Howgego, *Ancient History from Coins* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 88-90. Cunnally, *Images*, 34. Andrew Burnett, *Coins* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 51-56.

new buildings. One such container that held the medals of Pope Paul II has been retrieved from the walls of the Palazzo Venezia (fig. 104).<sup>55</sup> The artifact provides a clue as to the appearance of Julius's medallic deposits.

Placing portrait medals in the foundation of St. Peter's must have been especially poignant since the building process required the simultaneous destruction of a late-antique basilica along with the construction of a new church. Indeed, while demolishing Old St. Peter's, medieval coins were discovered in the foundations of some of the chapels.<sup>56</sup> Finding these relics of a bygone era presumably heightened the sense that their medals might one day be discovered by a future generation.

Julius and those tasked with rebuilding St. Peter's were constantly confronted with the decaying memories of antiquity. The Constantinian basilica was on the verge of collapse while fragmentary sculptures were regularly exhumed from the Roman soil. Yet even the most celebrated discovery, the Laocoön, was tinged with a sense of loss and deemed incomplete by Renaissance viewers (fig. 5). An anonymous sixteenth-century epigram reads, "How great is even now the wrath of the divinity: the mangled right hand, in which the statue was harmed, has been destroyed."<sup>57</sup> For decades artists attempted to finish the Trojan priest's missing limb, partaking in what can only be considered a trans-temporal collaboration with the original sculptors.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Schraven, "Out of sight," 190-91.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 190.

<sup>57</sup> *Ecce iterum redeunt. Quanta est iam numinis ira, dextera, qua laesa est machina, trunca perit.* Barkan, *Unearthing*, 6-7.

<sup>58</sup> Barkan, *Unearthing*, 8-15.

Antiquities such as the Laocoön and the Belvedere torso (fig. 26), both owned by Julius, had suffered varying degrees of damage by the Cinquecento.<sup>59</sup> As opposed to virtually every other medium, however, medals, like the ancient coins that inspired them, were significantly more durable. They were not susceptible to fracture, structural collapse, and exposure to the elements, as was the case with sculpture, architecture, and painting. Moreover, they were not liable to be inaccurately transcribed, as was the case with texts for which the originals were no longer extant.

Numismatic media allowed for the complete and therefore accurate transmission of messages, and this quality was prized by patrons, collectors, and antiquarians alike. In his 1555 book, *Discorsi sopra le medaglie de gli antichi*, Enea Vico argued for the primacy of coinage over other forms of historical evidence. He said, “Medals verify things that have been narrated truthfully, and they correct and amend the things that were written falsely.”<sup>60</sup>

The Renaissance belief in the unimpeachable status of coinage predates Vico by at least a century. Lorenzo Valla’s *On the Donation of Constantine*, written in 1440, invoked coinage in a scathing critique of the pope’s claim to authority. Valla cited the presence of imperial coins and the absence of papal coins in late antiquity as proof that Rome had not been ruled by the papacy. He argued, “Rome and Italy, together with the provinces I have named, belonged to the emperors. For this reason gold coins, of which I own many specimens, were in circulation... An innumerable number of coins of the popes would be found if you had ever ruled in Rome. No

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<sup>59</sup> Hans Henrik Brummer, “On the Julian Program of the Cortile delle Statue in the Vatican Belvedere,” in *Il Cortile delle Statue: Der Statuenhof des Belvedere Im Vatikan*, eds. Matthias Winner and Bernard Andreae (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1998), 67-76.

<sup>60</sup> *Le medaglie, delle cose con verità narrate sono testimonio, delle falsamente scritte sono corretrici*. Enea Vico, *Discorsi sopra le medaglie de gli antichi* (Florence: Appresso Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, 1558), Book I, p. 49. Translation by Cunnally, *Images*, 134-36. C. Höper, “Vico, Enea,” in *Oxford Art Online*, accessed June 5, 2010, <<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T089243>>.

such coins are found.”<sup>61</sup>Valla’s appeal to coinage illustrates just how much stock Renaissance viewers placed in these tiny antiquities, and it helps explain why patrons chose medals as a means to perpetuate their own reputations.

The use of foundation medals illustrates a clear desire by the patron for fame, not just among contemporaries, but for generations to come. The endeavor can be seen as an attempt to achieve a sort of worldly immortality, a concept specifically at odds with Christian notions of immortality and salvation through Christ. The desire to achieve eternal fame was presumably inspired by, among other sources, the countless coins of Roman emperors discovered in the Renaissance. Furthermore, the pursuit of lasting fame and glory had been a frequently debated subject in humanist circles since the time of Petrarch.<sup>62</sup>

There was a very pagan slant to the goal of self-perpetuation and to the form of the medals in particular. In spite of this seemingly profane ambition, I propose that the use of foundation medals may have at its heart a supremely Christian message.<sup>63</sup> Placing medals in the foundations of a building presupposes that one day that very building will be destroyed and someone will dig through its ruins in the same way people in the Renaissance plundered the ruins of antiquity. In his treatise, Filarete acknowledged the eventual destruction of his own structures.<sup>64</sup> The practice of using foundation medals posits an earthly transience for buildings even though they are some of mankind’s most enduring creations. The custom included a

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<sup>61</sup> Lorenzo Valla, *On the Donation of Constantine*, trans. G.W. Bowersock (London: Harvard University Press, 2008), 26.

<sup>62</sup> In *My Secret Book*, Petrarch addressed the conflict humanists struggled with in balancing fame and worldly preoccupations on the one hand and religious concerns on the other. Francesco Petrarch, *My Secret Book*, trans. J.G. Nichols (London: Hesperus, 2002), 7-17.

<sup>63</sup> Christian argues that a primary motive for collecting antiquities was the desire to establish one’s fame for eternity. Christian, *Empire*, 142-49.

<sup>64</sup> See note 52 in this chapter.



supposition of the decay of all things worldly, and an unspoken acceptance of the permanence of God's heavenly kingdom.<sup>65</sup>

The practice of burying foundation medals in a basilica was certainly inspired by an admixture of pagan and Christian sentiment typical of Roman culture in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The intermingling of polytheistic and Christian beliefs was prominent in the work of Egidio da Viterbo, an Augustinian preacher favored by Julius.<sup>66</sup> Egidio, a Neoplatonist and disciple of Marsilio Ficino, displayed a predilection for pagan beliefs in his treatment of the gods of the Roman Pantheon. In a treatise on the phenomenal world he discussed the mythological figures in the same manner as biblical persons, and he claimed that the pagan gods had served as guardian angels for classical heroes.<sup>67</sup> Although Renaissance Rome was undeniably Christian, the aura of the ancient city pervaded the culture of those living among the remnants of the fallen empire.

Egidio was extremely passionate about the sibyls' role in prophesying the coming of Christ and the universal *imperium* of the Roman Church. The sibyls were prophetesses from oracular shrines that were considered sacred in classical antiquity. Legends of the sibyls persisted through the Middle Ages, but some Renaissance humanists, including Valla, dismissed the figures as heresy. Pomponio Leto and other influential humanists in the late fifteenth and

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<sup>65</sup> The idea of Rome in decay was common in the Renaissance, and it is palpable in the writings of Poggio Bracciolini, among others. Poggio Bracciolini, "The Ruins of Rome," in *The Portable Renaissance Reader*, eds. James Bruce Ross and Mary Martin McLaughlin (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 379-84. Barkan, *Unearthing*, 31-32.

<sup>66</sup> John O'Malley, *Praise and Blame*, 27. Rowland, *Culture*, 144-48.

<sup>67</sup> Egidio da Viterbo worked on his treatise, *Sententiae ad mentem Platonis* "Thoughts or Sayings According to the Mind of Plato," from 1506-13. Rowland, *Culture*, 146-47.

early sixteenth centuries, however, supported the sibylline prophecies.<sup>68</sup> The sibyls became increasingly popular during the High Renaissance, and they were even accorded equal status with biblical prophets on the Sistine chapel ceiling; a site intimately linked with Christian theology and papal supremacy.<sup>69</sup> Roman humanists and theologians alike had a tendency to accommodate their pagan roots. In light of this cultural milieu, as well as the worldly and secular connotations associated with the burial practice, it is not surprising that Julius embraced the custom of using foundation medals for a church.

### **Pope Julius II's Medals for Civitavecchia**

Despite the incredible scale of St. Peter's Basilica and the financial strain caused by the project, Julius continued to commission new buildings both in and around the Eternal City.<sup>70</sup> By December 1508 construction had begun on a fortress in the coastal town of Civitavecchia, approximately sixty kilometers from Rome. Work at the site involved more than just a simple castle, of which there were dozens in the Papal States alone.<sup>71</sup> Construction ordered by the pope entailed the building of a fortress, the reconstruction of the harbor, and possibly the development of an entire port city (fig. 105).<sup>72</sup> The extensive building project was part of Julius's larger campaign to exert control over territories outside of Rome. It is not surprising then that two

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<sup>68</sup> Ficino also discussed the sibyls in his 1474 tract, *De Christiana Religione*. Michael Allen, *The Sibyl in Ficino's Oaktree* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press: 1980), 205-10.

<sup>69</sup> Edgar Wind, *The Religious Symbolism of Michelangelo: The Sistine Ceiling* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 124-48. Stinger, 308-12. John O'Malley, "The Theology Behind Michelangelo's Ceiling," in *The Sistine Chapel: The Art, the History, and the Restoration*, ed. Massimo Giacometti (New York: Harmony Books, 1986), 112-18.

<sup>70</sup> Due to exorbitant costs, Julius reduced the scale of St. Peter's and used cheap materials such as crushed tufa, while Travertine was used sparingly. Frommel, "St. Peter's," 413.

<sup>71</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 147.

<sup>72</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 118-22.

medals would have been designed to commemorate the grand undertaking and spread word of the pope's plans (figs. 51 and 55).<sup>73</sup> Julius had similarly commissioned four medals of St. Peter's. The purpose of the seemingly repetitive subject matter is not completely clear, but compared to the cost of a building, architectural medals can be seen as a relatively small investment in spreading the fame of both the patron and the structure.<sup>74</sup> The works of art also functioned as immediate reminders of what the final product would look like, even if it would not be completed for decades.

A pot of medals was placed in the foundation of the Civitavecchia fortress during a ceremony in 1508, while other copies were most likely distributed to powerful figures close to the pope.<sup>75</sup> One of the medals was designed by Pier Maria Serbaldi with an obverse that featured Julius's portrait and the inscription, IVLII II ARCISFVNDAT, "Julius II Founder of the Fortress." The medal's reverse included a view of the castle and the inscription, CIVITA VECHIA (fig. 51).<sup>76</sup> A different medal, this one by Gian Cristoforo Romano, rendered Julius in profile along with the inscription, IVLIVS LIGVR PAPA SECVNDVS, "Pope Julius II the Ligurian" (fig. 55). The reverse also shows the castle at Civitavecchia, and the inscription reads CENTVM CELLE, meaning "Place of a Hundred Rooms."<sup>77</sup> This was the classical name of

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<sup>73</sup> For the Castel Sigismondo medals see Hill, cats. 163, 164, 174, and 175. For the St. Peter's medals see Hill, cats. 659, 660, 870, and 871.

<sup>74</sup> Schraven, "Out of sight," 192-93.

<sup>75</sup> Paris de' Grassi described a *vase uno plenus numismatibus novs*, as quoted by Weiss, "Julius," 176-77.

<sup>76</sup> Hill, cat. 224. Weiss, "Julius," 173-77.

<sup>77</sup> Hill, cat. 872. Weiss, "Julius," 175.

Civitavecchia and it can be traced to the *Epistulae* of Pliny the Younger from the early second century AD.<sup>78</sup>

The most significant differences between the Civitavecchia medals are the inscriptions and the orientations of the portraits. Gian Cristoforo's medal features a right-facing portrait of Julius on the obverse with the ancient name of the town on the reverse, while Serbaldi's includes a left-facing portrait of the pope on the obverse and the modern name on the reverse.<sup>79</sup> One can speculate that the medals were intended to form a pair so that when placed side by side the portraits would appear to address one another and create an aesthetic union. More important than the visual cohesiveness, however, were the contrasting inscriptions, which referred to both modernity and antiquity while appearing to play with notions of past and present. Although the form of the epigraphs can be attributed to a simple predilection for all things antique, they may stem from Renaissance conceptions of time and authenticity as well as the peculiar antiquarian tendencies of Julius and the humanists for whom he acted as a patron.<sup>80</sup>

The use of the ancient name betrays the affected tastes of the inscription's presumably humanist author. The rarely used and functionally antiquated term, CENTVM CELLE, is reminiscent of a peculiar inscription from Julius's fortress in Ostia. The fortress, built from 1483-86, while he was still a cardinal, includes a monumental epigraph on the eastern side of the tower. The end of the inscription states that the castle was completed in "the year of human salvation 1486, 2115 from the foundation of Ostia, 2129 from Ancus Marcius founder of the

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<sup>78</sup> Pliny the Younger, *C. Plinii Caecilii Secundi Epistulae ad Traianum imperatorem cum eiusdem responsis*, ed. E.G. Hardy (New York: Macmillan, 1889), 11. Hill, cat. 872. Weiss, "Julius," 175.

<sup>79</sup> For more on the possible meanings of heraldic dexter and sinister see Hall, *The Sinister Side*, 25-38.

<sup>80</sup> The study of time and multiple conceptions of time during various historical periods is now increasing in popularity. Marvin Trachtenberg, *Building-in-Time: From Giotto to Alberti and Modern Oblivion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 11-19. Keith Moxey, *Visual Time: The Image in History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 1-8.

city.”<sup>81</sup> Only three other instances of this type of dating are known, and all of their authors were closely connected to the Roman Academy of Pomponio Leto.<sup>82</sup> One of the humanists to use this form of dating was Tommaso Inghirami, the Vatican Librarian under Julius.<sup>83</sup>

Both the medallic and architectural inscriptions were likely produced by authors who frequented the same intellectual circles and shared similar theories about the relationship between antiquity and their own time period. The wording was typical of the cultural atmosphere of Renaissance Rome in which humanists tried to replace words like “nun” with “Vestal Virgin” and “College of Cardinals” with “Sacred Senate.”<sup>84</sup> The inscriptions, however, were more than mere classical imitation. They seem to have been intentionally employed to directly link the subjects that they commemorated to the classical world through an ancient literary form. I suggest that their respective authors were positing a continuum between antiquity and the founding of Renaissance buildings.

In the case of the architectural inscription, continuity was suggested by reckoning time from the foundation of Ostia. As for the medallic inscription, it may have been intended to depict Julius not only in a format shared with ancient emperors, as was the case with all Renaissance medals, but as an ancient ruler. In other words, the medal was not meant to be

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<sup>81</sup> The full inscription reads, *Julianus Saonas Cardinalis Ostiensis aleae maris excipiendae ergo, pro que agro Romano servando Ostia que munienda Tyberis que oribus tuendis, arcem quam Xysto IIII Pontifice Maximo patruo suo coepit, successore Innocentio VIII Pontifice Maximo amne ducto circum, sua impensa a fundamentis absolvit, anno humanae salutis MCCCCLXXXVI, ab Ostia condita MMCXV, ab Anco urbis auctore ZCXXIX.* According to Weiss this translates as, “Julian of Savona, Cardinal of Ostia, in order to eliminate the hazards of the sea and in order to preserve the Roman countryside, fortify Ostia, and defend the mouth of the Tiber, completed this fortress, which he initiated from its foundations under his paternal uncle Pope Sixtus IV, and brought the river around it, all at his own expense, under his successor Innocent VIII, the year of human salvation 1486, 2115 from the foundation of Ostia, 2129 from Ancus Marcius founder of the city.” Weiss, *Sixtus*, 33.

<sup>82</sup> St. Jerome’s Latin version of the Chronicle of Eusebius was the source for the arcane date. Weiss, *Sixtus*, 33-36. Pomponio Leto’s academy was disbanded by Paul II but it was restored by Sixtus IV. For more details about Leto’s circle see Christian, *Empire*, 121-34.

<sup>83</sup> Rowland, *Culture*, 151.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

classicizing, but *classical*. Considering that it was placed in the foundation of the fortress in order to be discovered by people in the distant future, the phrase CENTVM CELLE may be interpreted as an attempt to collapse time and equate Julius directly with the emperors of ancient Rome. As both a retrospective and forward-looking art form, this work was clearly employed to confront the temporal dimension, and it may have been intended to edit history so as to shape Julius's legacy.

The CENTVM CELLE medal must be examined through the lens of Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood's theory of the Renaissance notion of time and the double-historicity of objects. According to the scholarly duo, sixteenth-century artists and patrons did not view the literal circumstances of a work of art's production as crucial to its meaning.<sup>85</sup> Instead they posited that viewers during this period often treated artifacts as ancient or originals, even if they knew that they were recent creations. Nagel and Wood wrote, "Under this conception of the temporal life of artifacts, which we will call the principle of *substitution*, modern copies of painted icons were understood as effective surrogates for lost originals, and new buildings were understood as reinstatiations, through typological association, of prior structures."<sup>86</sup>

The medal may have been intended to be viewed as an antiquity, thereby presenting Julius as the original founder of the ancient city of Centum Celle, rather than simply as the patron of a new fortress at Civitavecchia.<sup>87</sup> I am not suggesting that this was a forgery of an ancient coin.<sup>88</sup> Instead, I propose that placing the medal within the occluded space of the

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<sup>85</sup> Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic*, 7-19.

<sup>86</sup> Nagel and Wood, "Toward a New Model," 405.

<sup>87</sup> Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic*, passim, esp. 103-05, 240-46, 290-93.

<sup>88</sup> Christopher Wood, *Forgery, Replica, Fiction: Temporalities of German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 2008, 109-25, 255, 60.

building's foundations activated the object so that it would be perceived as ancient. The darkened site of burial was a liminal space, which the Renaissance audience understood as the privileged site of antiquity. It was, after all, in these types of locations that the material remains of ancient Rome were discovered. During the Renaissance, the subterranean world was a realm not just associated with the antique, it was also a site occupied by and belonging to antiquity. To sixteenth-century viewers, the ancient world existed directly beneath the modern world.<sup>89</sup> By placing an antique-like object in this space, the Renaissance medal was charged with the aura of imperial Rome and consequently it could be perceived as antique.

The CENTVM CELLE medal, as well as the St. Peter's medals, were inserted into the fabric of the past as attempts to speak to the future. They were employed as a means of establishing continuity between ancient Rome and the Renaissance papacy, even in the face of a chasm spanning more than a thousand years. The leap across time effectively short-circuited negative events from the recent and not so recent past, including conciliarism, the Babylonian Captivity, and a general erosion of papal hegemony. In doing so the medal presented a flawless image of Julius and the papacy while idealizing his position and greatly exaggerating his power.

The medal functioned not only to classicize Julius, but also to retroactively Christianize pagan antiquity. The act of collapsing time while applying the stamp of the pontiff on the past can be viewed as sanctioning the very concept of imperial Rome so that its power could be co-opted by the Christian head of state.<sup>90</sup> Julius had already used the vocabulary of the "temple" or *TEMPLI PETRI*, to refer to St. Peter's Basilica, and here he presented himself as a Roman

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<sup>89</sup> Barkan addressed the issue of the "parallel relationship" between ancient Rome and Renaissance Rome. While I find his discussion fascinating and thought-provoking, I disagree with his conclusion. He stated that "you cannot travel through symbolic space with a shovel." By burying medals I argue that they could *only* travel through symbolic space with a shovel. Barkan, *Unearthing*, 25.

<sup>90</sup> Similar issues of Christianizing pagan antiquity under Julius are cogently discussed in Verdon, "Pagans," 119-127.

Emperor.<sup>91</sup> The use of medals as building deposits can be interpreted as Julius's way of sanctifying classical antiquity while eternalizing Christianity.

A number of questions about the buried medals remain unanswered. Was the CIVITA VECHIA medal meant to portray Julius as a Renaissance figure while the CENTVM CELLE medal was supposed to show him as an ancient one? Were both of these buried in the foundations of the fortress or was the CENTVM CELLE medal the only one included in the deposit? How seriously were Julius's claims to antique status supposed to be taken by the Renaissance audience and by the future audience? While we may never know the answers to these questions, it can be said with great certainty that Julius, and the humanists for whom he acted as patron, viewed their relationship to history -- past, present, and future -- in a fascinating and unique manner. Their disposition was influenced by the exciting historical moment to which they belonged. Ancient Rome was being unearthed, renovated, and rebuilt before their eyes, while its history was being rewritten and reinterpreted.<sup>92</sup>

### **An Urban Fortress: Medals for the Palace of Justice**

Julius's building program continued across the Tiber from St. Peter's Basilica with the construction of a never-completed administrative building called the Palazzo dei Tribunali. The enormous structure was commemorated by at least three medals, all of which are now attributed to Serbaldi. The first of these features a portrait of Julius on the obverse circumscribed by the

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<sup>91</sup> Hill, cat. 659-60.

<sup>92</sup> The inscription on the fortress in Ostia reckons time in relation to the birth of Christ and the founding of Rome, thus it is a dead giveaway that the builders were not from the ancient world. This perhaps reflects their uneasiness about the idea of representing themselves as antique, and it also situates them in history in relation to both Christianity and the classical world. The CENTVM CELLE medal has no absolute marker of time, which means it could feasibly be interpreted as antique. Perhaps by the beginning of the sixteenth century Roman humanists' disposition towards the ancient world had developed to the point that they were more comfortable with, and adept at, playing with time.



inscription IVLIVS SECVNDVS PONTIFEX MAXI, “Julius II Pontifex Maximus”(fig. 58).<sup>93</sup>

The reverse includes an image of a fortress-like structure and the phrase IVRI REDD, “Returner of Justice.”<sup>94</sup> The building was part of Julius’s ambitious plan, which included not only renovating the fabric of the city, but completely overhauling Rome’s civic institutions as well.<sup>95</sup>

The location, size, and function of the Palace of Justice are crucial to understanding how the building would have fit into Julius’s agenda. He wanted to assert greater authority over the territories of the Church, and foremost among these was the city of Rome. Bramante’s building was located on the Via Giulia, a street named after the pope, which ran parallel to the Tiber near its east bank. The wide thoroughfare was constructed during the second half of Julius’s reign, and it was the longest artificially straight street created in Rome since antiquity. Cut directly into the heart of the city, it destroyed everything in its path and imposed Julius’s will upon the populace.<sup>96</sup> The new street was to connect the Ponte Sisto, a bridge erected by his uncle, to the Ponte Trionfale, an ancient bridge that Julius planned to rebuild.<sup>97</sup> The Palace of Justice was to be a massive structure, with a footprint of seventy-six by ninety-six meters. To put this in perspective, the plan called for its main façade to be six meters longer than the main façade of

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<sup>93</sup> Weiss, “Julius,” 177-78. Hill, cat. 225.

<sup>94</sup> The inscription may also be construed as IVRI meaning *iuris*, which translates to “law” rather than “justice.” With this interpretation the inscription would indicate that Julius returns law and order to Rome, rather than returning justice to Rome. I must thank Professor Thomas Cohen who assisted me with this translation after seeing my presentation at the Early Modern Rome 2 Conference that was put on by the University of California, Rome in October, 2013.

<sup>95</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 168-73. Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 108-09.

<sup>96</sup> Frommel, “Papal Policy,” 50. Linda Pellecchia, “Urban Form in Early Sixteenth-Century Rome,” in *Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 66-72.

<sup>97</sup> Frommel, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, 108-09.

the Cancelleria, which was one of the largest Renaissance palaces in Rome.<sup>98</sup> By placing the colossal structure on the broad, new street named for himself, Julius intended to leave his personal stamp on the city.

Rome was not a unified entity throughout the Renaissance, but rather was divided by various factions, including local baronial clans and groups of cardinals that were loyal to different monarchs and dukes. The city was also populated by a number of fortified palaces. Control of these was critical during pivotal moments such as papal elections or visits by foreign rulers, when Rome threatened to descend into full-scale warfare between militias with allegiances to various princes or baronial families.<sup>99</sup> In light of this urban dynamic, I propose that the Palazzo dei Tribunali was intended to function as the lynch-pin in Julius's plan for territorial domination of the city, a plan unmatched by any previous pope.

Some scholars have claimed that the pontiff was simply commissioning a large number of new building projects without any order and discernible goal. According to Christoph Frommel, for example, "Julius's contributions to Roman urbanism were...lacking in coherence."<sup>100</sup> While Frommel's impact on the study of Renaissance architecture has been enormous and invaluable, I disagree with this particular statement. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the pope was attempting to create a unified district extending from the Vatican into the center of Rome. As pontiff, Julius already controlled the Vatican and much of the city on the western side of the Tiber. He increased his presence in this area by expanding St. Peter's and the Vatican Palace. The *Passetto di Borgo*, a fortified corridor that connected the Vatican to the Castel Sant'Angelo, and the partially completed Via Alessandrina, a straight street leading

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<sup>98</sup> Von Moos, 50.

<sup>99</sup> Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 51-55.

<sup>100</sup> Frommel, "Papal Policy," 51.

from St. Peter's to this same castle, extended the pope's dominion to the river.<sup>101</sup> The nearby Ponte Trionfale would have connected his expansive stronghold with the east bank at the Via Giulia, while the Palazzo dei Tribunali would have stood approximately midway down the pope's namesake street. Through architectural commissions and urban engineering, Julius intended to radically reshape this area of the city so as to more easily exert papal control.

Bramante's fortified palace was across the street from the Cancelleria Vecchia, which had been the palace of Julius's detested predecessor, Rodrigo Borgia. After Borgia's death it was occupied by Cardinal Sisto Della Rovere, Julius's nephew. The large piazza between the two palaces was intended to be the Forum Iulium, which would have effaced the memory of the Borgia and replaced it with a space meant to glorify the Della Rovere dynasty.<sup>102</sup> The back of the Palace of Justice would have abutted the river, thereby allowing the building to be visible from a number of vantage points in the city instead of merely blending into the already dense urban fabric.<sup>103</sup> Had it been completed, the Palazzo dei Tribunali would have been one of the largest buildings in Rome after St. Peter's and the Colosseum. The network of streets, bridges, piazzas, and buildings constructed and controlled by the pope would have permanently shifted the political center of gravity away from Rome's civic seat of power on the Capitoline and towards the Vatican (fig. 106).

Not just the size and location, but the function of the Palazzo dei Tribunali also signaled a power-grab by Julius. The palace was designed to house Rome's civil and ecclesiastical courts,

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<sup>101</sup> Frommel, "Papal Policy," 49-50.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 51-53.

<sup>103</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 169-73.

allowing the papacy to consolidate both spiritual and legal power over the city's inhabitants.<sup>104</sup>

The building, and thus the medals commemorating it, date to 1508, which was the period after

Julius had returned from Bologna and bolstered his authority over much of the Papal States.

The medals made it clear to the upper echelon of Roman society that Julius intended to take over

one of the remaining instruments of authority from the civic government. Both the civic nobility

and local barons, however, strongly opposed the pope's infringement on their few remaining

privileges. When Julius fell ill in 1511, rival factions united on the Campidoglio along with their

militias in order to demand the return of legal jurisdiction, among other powers, from the

papacy.<sup>105</sup> Such strong opposition, in conjunction with the overly ambitious scale of the

building, explains why construction of the Palace of Justice was halted before it was ever

functional.<sup>106</sup> All that remains today are the rusticated remnants of the unfinished edifice (fig.

107).

Another medal struck around this time had the same image of the Palazzo dei Tribunali

on the reverse, but the obverse was taken from Serbaldi's medal of the fortress at Civitavecchia

(fig. 59).<sup>107</sup> The primary difference between the CIVITA VECHIA obverse and the one used on

the first medal of the Palazzo dei Tribunali was the inscription. The epigraph on the first obverse

simply referred to Julius as pope, but the inscription on the second medal read, IVLII II ARCIS

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<sup>104</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 169. For a more complete discussion of Rome's complex and inefficient legal system in the Cinquecento, see Suzanne Butters and Pier Nicola Pagliara, "The Palazzo dei Tribunali and Via Giulia in Rome," *Zodiac* 14 (1995): 15-20.

<sup>105</sup> The event was known as the "Pax Romana," and the enraged Roman nobility protested for the election of more Roman cardinals, control over Roman tax revenues, and judicial authority within the city. Pellicchia, 71. Kathleen Wren Christian, *Empire Without End: Antiquities Collections in Renaissance Rome, c. 1350-1527* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 205.

<sup>106</sup> Frommel, "Papal Policy," 51-53. Unstable soil may have been yet another factor that impeded the building process. Karmon, 254, note 16, p. 254. Butters and Pagliara, 25.

<sup>107</sup> Hill, cat. 226.

FVNDAT, “Julius II Founder of the Fortress,” thus emphasizing the fortress-like nature of the Palace of Justice. Precisely why this variation of the medal was struck is unknown, but it explicitly placed the structure within the tradition of the urban palace-fortress, two of which had been commemorated by papal medals during the second half of the Quattrocento. Paul II commissioned a medal for the Palazzo Venezia (fig. 108) and Alexander VI commissioned two medals to commemorate his renovations of the Castel Sant’Angelo (fig. 82).<sup>108</sup> Since fortified bases such as these were crucial for maintaining control over the city, perhaps the ARCIS FVNDAT inscription was meant to highlight the martial function of the building.<sup>109</sup>

A third medal by Serbaldi appears to depict the Palace of Justice on the reverse, but unlike the previous medallic design, the foreground of this image includes a personification of Justice standing next to a seated blacksmith (fig. 60).<sup>110</sup> The building looks virtually identical to the one on the previous medal. Serbaldi’s portrait of Julius with the ARCIS FVNDAT inscription was again used on the obverse. The number of medals commissioned for the building indicates the structure’s importance in Julius’s plan for a strategic takeover of the city.

### **Fortresses in Italian Renaissance Art**

Two different medals were made for the castle at Civitavecchia and three were created for the Palazzo dei Tribunali, but fortresses played a role in Julius’s medallic patronage even

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<sup>108</sup> Hill, cats. 783, 854, 855. For more on the medals of the Palazzo Venezia see Minou Schraven, “Out of sight, yet still in place: On the use of Italian Renaissance portrait medals as building deposits,” *RES* 55/56 (2009): 189-91. For more on Alexander VI’s renovations to the Castel Sant’Angelo see Pastor, *Popes*, Vol. VI (Alexander VI-Julius II), 168-70.

<sup>109</sup> Shaw repeatedly refers to the strategic importance of the Castel Sant’Angelo in controlling the city, and she discusses civil unrest in Rome, especially around the time of papal elections. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, passim, esp. 117-27. Stanislaus Von Moos, “The Palace as a Fortress: Rome and Bologna under Pope Julius II,” in *Art and Architecture in the Service of Politics*, eds. Henry Millon and Linda Nochlin (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1978), 46-49.

<sup>110</sup> Hill, cat. 227.

before he was elected pope. In 1483, while still Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere, he commissioned a medal from an unknown Roman artist with his portrait on the obverse and an image of his yet to be completed castle in Ostia on the reverse (fig. 28).<sup>111</sup> The prominence of fortresses in Julius's corpus of medals reflected his reported interest in bastions. During the course of various expeditions through the Papal States he took time to admire fortifications. He apparently enjoyed inspecting the structures and ordering repairs and additions to the buildings.<sup>112</sup>

Fortresses were frequently featured on Julius's medals, not simply because of his predilection for military architecture, but also because representations of castles in the Renaissance had strong symbolic connotations. Depictions of these structures alluded to both the possession of land and the military strength of a prince, and they were employed in the art of numerous rulers during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>113</sup> Andrea Mantegna's frescoes in the Camera degli Sposi in Mantua were commissioned by Lodovico Gonzaga shortly after he became the sole ruler of the Mantovano in 1466, and the background landscape includes representations of a number of castles (fig. 109). In terms of numismatics, Sigismondo Malatesta commissioned multiple portrait medals with his fortress in Rimini on the reverses (fig.

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<sup>111</sup> Hill, cat. 817. Along with this medal Giuliano ordered another with Pope Sixtus IV's portrait on the obverse and similar view of the Ostia castle on the reverse. Hill, cat. 816 ter. Silvia Danesi Squarzina and Gabriele Borghini, *Il Borgo di Ostia da Sisto IV a Giulio II : mostra a Ostia, Fortezza ed Episcopio* (Roma: De Luca, 1981), passim.

<sup>112</sup> Shaw, "Patronage," 45. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 152-53, 160. Luigi Frati, *Le Due Spedizioni Militari di Giulio II: Tratte dal Diario di Paride Grassi Bolognese* (Bologna: Regia Tipografia, 1886), 26-27.

<sup>113</sup> Woods-Marsden, "Quattrocento Princes," 396-99. Joanna Woods-Marsden, "Images of Castles in the Renaissance: Symbols of 'Signoria'/Symbols of Tyranny," *Art Journal* 48/2, (1989): 130-32. The symbolic significance of fortresses was no doubt derived from their functional importance in holding territories. Key aspects of Julius's negotiations with various rival factions often involved the control of fortresses. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 93, 99-100, 131.

110).<sup>114</sup> These works of art advertised the defenses of the rulers, symbolizing their right of *signoria*.<sup>115</sup> Along these same lines, the pope's main strategic objective was the defense of the Church's territories and the reassertion of papal sovereignty, and an image of a fortress was a widely legible means of communicating the appearance of martial strength and rulership over a city.<sup>116</sup>

Renderings of the citadels of both Sigismondo and Julius were idealized, as each image exaggerated the impression of the fortress dominating the landscape.<sup>117</sup> In the case of Julius's castle at Civitavecchia, the depiction on the medal included architectural features that were not only unnecessary, but dysfunctional from a military standpoint, while the medallic images of the Palazzo dei Tribunali may well have overstated the fortress-like nature of the edifice.<sup>118</sup> Considering the unfinished states of the castles, Julius's medals more accurately represented his aspirations than his actual military power.

The medals were intended for a courtly audience, but the buildings were viewed daily by the general population, and they would have been understood differently by the masses. Fortresses were not appreciated by the lower classes as emblems of strength, rather they were despised as symbols of tyranny and oppression. Had it been completed, the imposing façade of the Palace of Justice would have functioned as a potent symbol of Julius's authoritarian stance

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<sup>114</sup> Hill, cats. 163, 164, 174, 175, 176, 177, 184, 185, 186.

<sup>115</sup> Woods-Marsden, "Quattrocento Princes," 396-99. Hill, cat. 180.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 396-99. Woods-Marsden, "Castles," 130-32. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 93, 99-100, 131. Shaw, "Patronage," 44-45.

<sup>117</sup> Woods-Marsden, "Quattrocento Princes," 396-99. Hill, cat. 180.

<sup>118</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 121-22.

toward the Roman populace.<sup>119</sup> The outwardly militaristic appearance of the administrative building seems to have been an intentional choice by the pope and his architectural advisers, especially considering that recent advances in architectural design provided outstanding security while allowing for an elegant appearance. The Cancelleria was built by Cardinal Raffaele Riario in the late Quattrocento. It lacked the battlements and generally stern appearance of other fortified buildings, yet it maintained the requisite level of security needed for a Renaissance urban palace (fig. 111).<sup>120</sup>

The topics of how and even whether or not a ruler should build a castle were popular among political and architectural theorists of the Renaissance. Alberti addressed the subjects in *De re aedificatoria*, and Machiavelli devoted a chapter of *The Prince* to the discussion of castles.<sup>121</sup> Considering the significant amount of debate surrounding fortresses during this period, it is likely that the use of an outwardly militaristic design for the Palazzo dei Tribunali was a conscious decision by the patron and architect. The building's form could have been intended as a warning to the Roman people about the stern manner by which the pope intended to rule.

Fortresses in the Renaissance symbolized more than just possession of land and military strength. They also held deeper meanings based on ancient literary sources that would have resonated in the classicizing genre of portrait medals. The fortress was a known metaphor in ancient Rome for courage, bravery, and strength of will. The Stoic philosopher Seneca wrote the *Epistulae Morales* in the first century AD, in which he stated, "And what is bravery? It is the

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<sup>119</sup> Woods-Marsden, "Castles," 133-34.

<sup>120</sup> Frommel, "Papal Policy," 48-49.

<sup>121</sup> Woods-Marsden, "Castles," 133. Alberti, IV.2-11, and V. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Russell Price, ed. Quentin Skinner (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), Chapter 20.



impregnable fortress for our mortal weakness; when a man surrounded himself therewith, he can hold out free from anxiety during life's siege; for he is using his own strength and his own weapon."<sup>122</sup>

In *De clementia*, a source known since the Middle Ages, Seneca discussed the safety of a ruler, a topic that was also popular among Renaissance writers. He said, "Mercy will assure the king's safety even in the open. He has one impregnable bulwark—the love of the citizens."<sup>123</sup>

Seneca was not the only ancient author to discuss the symbolic value of the fortress. In the *Panegyric*, a text rediscovered in the fifteenth century, Pliny wrote, "Experience shows us that the one guard which a prince can wholly trust is his own innocence. The sole citadel without access, the one impregnable bulwark which can never be breached."<sup>124</sup>

Metaphorical references to fortresses were not confined to antique rhetoric, as Petrarch used similar linguistic constructions. The Renaissance trailblazer employed military imagery throughout the preface of *Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul* while referring to specific ancient philosophers, including Seneca. Petrarch concluded his introductory remarks with the following advice: "You should read the book as if those [passions]...fiercely assaulted from all sides the

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<sup>122</sup>*Quid est fortitudo? Munimentum humanae imbecillitatis inexpugnabile, quod qui circumdedit sibi, securus in hac vitae obsidione perdurat; utitur enim suis viribus, suis telis.* Seneca, *Epistulae Morales*, 113: 27-28, in *Seneca in Ten Volumes*, Volume III, trans. Richard M. Gummere (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1972), 296-97. Elsewhere in the same text Seneca wrote, "Therefore, gird yourself about with philosophy, an impregnable wall. Though it be assaulted by many engines, Fortune can find no passage into it. The soul stands on unassailable ground, if it has abandoned external things; it is independent in its own fortress; and every weapon that is hurled falls short of the mark." *Philosophia circumdanda est, inexpugnabilis murus, quem fortuna multis machinis lacessitum non transit. In insuperabili loco stat animus, qui externa deseruit, et arce se sua vindicat; infra illum omne telum cadit. Non habet, ut putamus, fortuna longas manus; neminem occupant nisi haerentem sibi.* Seneca, *Epistulae Morales*, 82: 5. Seneca, *Epistles 66-92*, trans. Richard M. Gummere (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1996), 242-43.

<sup>123</sup>*Salvum regem clementia in aperto praestabit. Unum est inexpugnabile munimentum amore civium.* Seneca, *De Clementia*, I.19.6. Text available online, [http://www.stoics.com/seneca\\_essays\\_book\\_1.html](http://www.stoics.com/seneca_essays_book_1.html).

<sup>124</sup>*Discimus experimento fidissimam esse custodiam principis innocentiam ipsius. Haec arx inaccessa, hoc inexpugnabile munimentum non egere.* Pliny the Younger, *C. Plini Caecili Secundi Epistularum libri novem, Epistularum ad Traianum liber, Panegyricus*, 49.3.

mind of man, and Reason, who governs this citadel, took on all of them at once.”<sup>125</sup> Clearly the symbolic connotations of fortresses from antiquity continued to be perpetuated by Renaissance writers.

The images of castles on Julius’s medals must have had several meanings. In the most literal sense they commemorated his specific acts of architectural patronage, and symbolically they represented his temporal dominion. The genre of medals was supposed to elicit various interpretations, and the designer presumably intended that the humanist audience would also read the reverses as representative of Julius’s character. An extremely personal art form, the medal glorified and memorialized the sitter and his accomplishments. The portrait was literally fused to the image on the opposite side, thereby creating an unbreakable bond between the individual and the iconography. Common subjects for medallic reverses included heraldry, personal devices, and allegories with which the sitter closely identified.<sup>126</sup>

The fortress was a fitting symbol for a pope who was characterized by contemporaries as *terribile*.<sup>127</sup> *Terribilità* encapsulated the strong-willed yet impulsive pontiff. Sixteenth-century sources describe Julius as having “a mind of his own,” indifferent to harsh weather, and having a *natura terribile*.<sup>128</sup> Images of citadels were meant to epitomize strength, constancy, and courage. The characteristics that the fortress embodied would have added a less acerbic tinge to the pope’s infamous demeanor while still functioning as an appropriate pendant. The fortress celebrated

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<sup>125</sup> Francesco Petrarch, *Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul*, Vol. 1, Book 1, trans. Conrad Rawski (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), Preface, 10.

<sup>126</sup> Scher, ed., *Currency*, 15. For further discussion of the origins, rules, and theories surrounding Renaissance emblems see Mauda Bregoli-Russo, *L’Impresa come ritratto del Rinascimento* (Napoli: Loffredo, 1991), 10-18. Michel Pastoureau, *Couleurs, images, symboles: études d’histoire et d’anthropologie* (Paris: Léopard d’or, 1989), 159-79.

<sup>127</sup> David Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 234-41.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 239-40.

Julius's accomplishments and highlighted positive aspects of his character using easily recognizable iconography. Unlike the recondite imagery on the reverses of many medals, Julius and his advisers were clearly attracted to the simplicity offered by images of castles since they were used on six of his medals.<sup>129</sup>

### **Loreto: Church as Fortress and Papal *Imperium***

The final architectural medal commissioned by the pope was created by Pier Maria Serbaldi for the Basilica della Santa Casa in Loreto (fig. 63).<sup>130</sup> The obverse includes an image of Julius while the reverse features a depiction of the church's façade. The architectural endeavors in Loreto were quite extensive, as the pope commissioned renovations to the church, a marble revetment for the Holy House, and an Apostolic Palace adjacent to the basilica.<sup>131</sup> It was not until 1507, however, that Julius began to show an interest in the town, which was the year he removed Loreto from the jurisdiction of the local bishop and placed it under direct control of the Holy See. He also wrote a detailed constitution dictating rules for the religious and political life of the town.<sup>132</sup>

The pope's preoccupation with Loreto appears to have been prompted by both military and political concerns. By constructing the palace and placing the town directly under his power, Julius established a strong papal presence in a highly contested region. Located near the

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<sup>129</sup> The earliest of the fortress medals dates to Julius's cardinalate. The following is a list of all of his medals with castles on the reverses: Hill, cats. 224, 225, 226, 227, 817, 872.

<sup>130</sup> Hill, cat. 868. Bruschi, *Bramante*, 118-19. Graham Pollard, *Italian Renaissance Medals in the Museo Nazionale of Bargello: 1400-1530* (Firenze: SPES, 1984), 148-50.

<sup>131</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 118-19.

<sup>132</sup> Tanner, 186. Kathleen Weil-Garris, *The Santa Casa di Loreto: Problems in Cinquecento Sculpture*, Vol. 1 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977), 6-11.

strategically vital port of Ancona, the town functioned as a convenient stopover between Rome and Bologna, while the hilltop setting made it easily defensible.<sup>133</sup> The Loreto medal, however, stands out from the rest of Julius's architectural medals, since all of the other works of art featured images of buildings in or around Rome.<sup>134</sup> While Julius was certainly concerned with establishing a vast empire, this trend reveals that his primary focus was the Eternal City. He seems to have been aware of the need to reestablish Rome's prominence before investing resources elsewhere in the Papal States, but his treatment of Loreto underscores the importance of the small town.

Julius's support of the religious shrine presumably fostered goodwill with the people of Loreto. The local population would have benefitted from additional commerce as a result of the increased prestige of the Santa Casa. His patronage of a pilgrimage destination can also be read as a shrewd public relations maneuver. It would have added a pious sheen to the image of the notoriously militant pontiff.

Much like Julius's medals of fortifications, I propose that the Loreto medal was intended to proclaim the *imperium* of the papacy. While images of castles represented the territorial possessions of secular rulers, images of churches could have been read as symbolizing the sovereignty of religious rulers. Considering the pope's role as the leader the Western Christianity, no architectural image would have embodied his authority more than a depiction of a church. Not only the Loreto medal, but those of St. Peter's may also have been intended to represent territorial possession since they depicted the seat of the pope's power. Supporting this statement is the fact that the image on the Loreto medal is rather generic. Lacking iconographic

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<sup>133</sup> Weil-Garris, 6-11. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, passim, esp. 173, 183, 203, 262.

<sup>134</sup> Civitavecchia is closer to Rome than any other major city and it was the main port for the papacy in the region, so it can be considered to have fallen within Rome's sphere of influence.

references to the Santa Casa, it offers a broad concept of the Church as an emblem of the pontiff, rather than merely commemorating a specific basilica.

Overlap between churches and fortresses did not originate in Loreto, as the two types of buildings shared common ground on a number of occasions. The plan for the Palazzo dei Tribunali included the large, domed Church of San Biagio, which was to be incorporated into the structure of the palace.<sup>135</sup> The form of the Sistine Chapel, built by Julius's uncle in the late Quattrocento, is noticeably fortress-like.<sup>136</sup> The fortified nature of the papal chapel is conspicuous from the Spartan exterior, as in this view from the Vatican Palace (fig. 112). That Julius and his advisers conceived of churches and castles along similar lines is apparent from the ritual for the laying of the foundation stone for a papal fortress in Bologna. The script for the ceremony was simply adapted from one used for a church by substituting the word *arx* for *ecclesia*.<sup>137</sup>

The site at Loreto combined a fortified hilltop palace, an enclosed piazza, and a church, but only the church was depicted on the reverse. The choice of imagery may have been dictated by the small surface of the medal, which measured only 36 mm in diameter. By depicting the church alone, the artist created a scene that was uncluttered and easy to decipher. The medal emphasized Julius's patronage of a Christian shrine, yet due to the close relationship between churches and fortresses, the image was still able to convey a message of territorial possession.

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<sup>135</sup> Bruschi, *Bramante*, 169-71.

<sup>136</sup> Frommel, "Papal Policy," 47.

<sup>137</sup> Shaw, "Patronage," 60. Frati, 148-49.

## Conclusion

Only a fraction of Julius's architectural projects were commemorated with portrait medals, but with six different buildings on thirteen medals, he exploited the format more frequently than had any previous Renaissance patron.<sup>138</sup> This series of commissions began shortly after Julius's election, peaked in 1508 with the enormous Palace of Justice and the extensive work at Civitavecchia, and concluded in 1509 with the complex at Loreto. The pontiff's patronage abated due to building costs, slow progress on existing projects, and his preoccupation with expelling French forces from the Papal States.

The extensive use of medals to commemorate architecture highlights the political nature of both the medals and the buildings. The fact that the structures were celebrated in a genre often used as gifts to diplomats and princes illustrates that the buildings were part of Julius's comprehensive effort to reestablish his role as an influential European monarch. While the medals may have only reinforced the pope's reputation as a domineering, impious ruler, they provided lasting images of structures that have been altered over the centuries, and they serve as a record of Julius's grand, if unrealized, vision of a papal empire.

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<sup>138</sup> Sixtus commemorated the Ponte Sisto with a medal. Hill, cat. 806. Paul II commissioned medals for the tribune of St. Peter's and multiple medals for Palazzo Venezia. Hill, cats. 764, 780, 783. Alexander VI commissioned two medals for his renovations and additions to the Castel Sant'Angelo. Hill, cats. 854, 855. Parts of the Vatican Palace were rebuilt without medallic commemoration and a large choir was added to Santa Maria del Popolo without medals being struck. Bruschi, *Bramante*, 196-97. Shaw mentioned several fortresses that were built or renovated by Julius but that were not commemorated with medals. Shaw, *Warrior Pope*, 131, 147, 160, 202.

## CHAPTER 4

### Text and Image: An Imperfect Union

It is often taken for granted that text and images work together in medals. In this chapter I will examine how they interrelate and why artists and patrons chose particular combinations of linguistic and iconographic elements. I argue that the various text-image relationships used in Renaissance portrait medals were drawn from the literary and artistic traditions of antiquity. I ultimately hope to explain how patrons used medals to communicate messages to viewers while clarifying precisely what information was transmitted through these complex works of art.

Scholars have traditionally taken conservative theoretical approaches to medals, primarily applying iconographical interpretations to the material.<sup>1</sup> They view medallic imagery as fixed, claiming it borrowed meaning from established symbols rather than producing new meaning. Furthermore, scholars have largely ignored how textual messages were intended to operate within the works of art.<sup>2</sup> I propose that messages functioned dynamically within a larger network of signification, while the manner in which signs were employed varied significantly, even within the oeuvre of a single artist. My readings of Julius's medals will be influenced by semiotics as I examine how the literary and visual, two different systems of encoding information, functioned together in order to convey messages to viewers. Although meanings carried by words and images intersect and overlap, they are typically not processed in the same

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<sup>1</sup> Most of the major twentieth century numismatic scholars can be included in this group, as can be some scholars who have published in the twenty-first century. Pertinent examples include Hill, Weiss, Pollard, and Middeldorf.

<sup>2</sup> Since there are such enormous quantities of medals to address, the best publications typically offer cursory treatments of each medal. Catalogue entries often include information on the patron, artist, and the general circumstances that led its commissioning, but rarely is the relationship between text and image analyzed.

manner.<sup>3</sup> An image is not read in the same way that a word is read, although the interpretation of some images is heavily influenced by language.<sup>4</sup>

In *Word and Image* Norman Bryson differentiated between the “discursive” and the “figural,” in which meaning in the former was dictated by language while in the latter it was controlled by iconographic elements.<sup>5</sup> I propose that the intermingling of text and image in portrait medals stimulated viewers to undertake both discursive and figural readings of the objects as they simultaneously processed divergent sign systems. This occurred with the obverse, then the reverse, and finally with the medal as a whole. The two sign systems at work in the medals combined to create meaning in a new system, the “numismatic,” which was loosely governed by its own set of conventions. It did not privilege language over images, but instead allowed them to complement one another in order to produce meaning and communicate messages to viewers.

### **The *Paragone*: A Historical Comparison of Text and Image**

The idea that the literary and the visual can serve complementary or even co-equal functions has long been part of the justification for employing images in Western Christianity. Around AD 600 Pope Gregory I (reigned 590-604) stated, “Pictures are used in churches so that those who are ignorant of letters may at least read by seeing on the walls what they cannot read

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<sup>3</sup> Ernst Gombrich, *Gombrich on the Renaissance*, Volume 2: *Symbolic Images* (London: Phaidon, 1985), 2-5.

<sup>4</sup> Fernande Saint-Martin, *Semiotics of Visual Language* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 1-75. Louis Marin, “Towards A Theory of Reading in the Visual Arts: Poussin’s *The Arcadian Shepherds*,” in *Calligram: Essays in New Art History from France*, ed. Norman Bryson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 63-65.

<sup>5</sup> Norman Bryson, *Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 4-6.



in books.”<sup>6</sup> The pronouncement by the medieval pontiff is viewed as a foundational aspect of the Western conception of how images function. Paintings and other works of art, when accompanied by a preacher’s words, were understood as surrogates for texts.<sup>7</sup> A clear-cut view of the text-image relationship did not persist, but close associations between language and iconography continued to serve a vital role in theoretical discussions of art.

Renaissance patrons and artists were acutely aware of the respective strengths and weaknesses of words and images as evidenced by the *paragone*. The debate, which was ongoing during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, compared the merits of poetry to painting and other visual arts.<sup>8</sup> Although people in the Renaissance never would have discussed the issues in semiotic terms, they knew that different messages were conveyed through different media, yet they also acknowledged that text and images shared some properties.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps the most famous artist to partake in the debate was Leonardo da Vinci. He wrote extensively about the *paragone*, primarily comparing painting to poetry in an attempt to ennoble his profession. His comments occasionally appear simplistic and self-serving. He stated, for

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<sup>6</sup> The statement was made in a letter to Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, *Epistula XI—Monumenta Germaniae historica*, Ep. 9, 195; and *Epistula XI—Monumenta germaniae historica*, Ep. II, 270. Quoted from John Francis Moffitt, *Painterly Perspective and Piety: Religious Uses of the Vanishing Point, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2008), 54.

<sup>7</sup> Leonard Barkan, *Michelangelo: A Life on Paper* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 69-70.

<sup>8</sup> Francis Ames-Lewis, *The Intellectual Life of the Early Renaissance Artist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 141-61.

<sup>9</sup> Claire Farago, *Leonardo Da Vinci’s Paragone: A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbinas* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 118-55. Much of the *paragone* related to the status of Renaissance artists. Various forms of literature, especially poetry, were viewed as having a higher status than painting and the visual arts. The genre of the medal, which was partially literary because of its inclusion of text, may have been entangled in attempts by artists to elevate their social standing. Carolyn Wilde, “Alberti and the Formation of Modern Art Theory,” in *A Companion to Art Theory*, eds. Paul Smith and Carolyn Wilde (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 3-6.

example, that painting was universally accessible while literature required interpreters.<sup>10</sup>

Leonardo did make several important points about the differences and similarities between visual and linguistic sign systems, some of which are germane to my study of portrait medals.

In the *Codex Urbinas* he remarked that painting can feature an endless array of subjects while writing is restricted by the finite number of words in a language.<sup>11</sup> His observation essentially noted that language uses a closed sign system while painting uses an open system. Leonardo perceived painting, or the visual arts in general, as providing more direct access to knowledge than did the written word. He claimed that through visual representations one could see the forms of nature, but “words, which are the works of man,” diluted the truth. The painter-turned-theorist highlighted the fact that language is a human construction, but he failed to recognize that the visual arts also used manmade signs, albeit imitative rather than completely abstract.<sup>12</sup>

Referring to the human figure, Leonardo praised the unity of presentation afforded by painting, and criticized how the written word offered only a “dismembered” view of the body.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, many tropes in the *paragone* derive from ancient discussions of art and poetry. Horace’s *Ars poetica*, for example, commented on the unitary visions allowed for by paintings.<sup>14</sup> When Leonardo stated that painting was “mute poetry” and poetry was “blind painting,” he was echoing remarks first articulated by Simonides of Ceos, the Archaic Greek

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<sup>10</sup> Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise On Painting [Codex Urbinas Latinus 1270]*, trans. by A. Philip McMahon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 9.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>14</sup> Barkan, *Michelangelo*, 120.

poet, who described a poem as a “speaking painting” and a painting as a “mute poem.”<sup>15</sup> The *paragone* ultimately made clear that people in the Renaissance were cognizant of the differences between messages transmitted through visual versus literary channels, and one can assume that this awareness affected the deployment of linguistic and iconographic elements on medals.

### **Conventional Placement of Text and Images on Portrait Medals**

Portrait medals were defined by the inclusion of iconographic and linguistic elements, but the two components had never been deployed in a consistent or standardized manner. Textual features such as signatures varied widely. Many medals, especially those from the Quattrocento, included long inscriptions proclaiming the authorship of the artist. A number of Matteo de’Pasti’s medals featured no reverse inscription other than a signature (fig. 113), yet only two of Julius’s medals were signed (figs. 30 and 44).<sup>16</sup> Additionally, some obverses lacked inscriptions (fig. 114), while the reverses of other medals were completely devoid of text (fig. 115).<sup>17</sup> By contrast, reverses were occasionally filled with nothing more than an inscription (fig. 116).<sup>18</sup>

Even the placement of text was never standardized. The most common location for an inscription was around the edge of the medal, circumscribing the image, but epigraphs sometimes spilled into the field (fig. 90).<sup>19</sup> Short inscriptions were also regularly featured in the

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<sup>15</sup> Barkan, *Michelangelo*, 7. Leonardo, 18.

<sup>16</sup> Matteo de’Pasti medals, George Francis Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini, Volume I* (London: British Museum, 1930, reprinted, Florence: SPES, 1984), cats. 158, 159, 160, 162. One of Julius’s medals as a cardinal was signed by Sperandio and the Camelio medal with signed with a miniscule CV, the artist’s initials, which were placed on the steps in the scene. Hill, cats. 395, 445.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, cats. 72 and 56.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, cats. 56, 72, 97, and 239. Examples of extremely large amounts of text on medals are Hill, cats. 898 and 899.

<sup>19</sup> Portions of the inscriptions on some medals of Alfonso V of Naples by Pisanello are located in the field rather than along the medal’s circumference. *Ibid.*, cats. 41, 43c, and 43d.

exergue, directly below the main image, as was the case with several of Julius's medals (figs. 58, 63, and 65).<sup>20</sup> In rare instances text was placed in concentric rings on the reverse of a medal, creating the impression that the words were spiraling inward (fig. 117).<sup>21</sup>

The lack of standard practices regarding text on medals may stem from the inconsistent use of inscriptions on Roman republican and imperial coinage, which is significant because ancient Roman currency had a greater influence on Renaissance medals than did any other visual or literary source. Early republican coins often had minimal wording, or none whatsoever, on the obverses, and little more than the word ROMA on the reverses (fig. 118).<sup>22</sup> Text seems to have been used more extensively at the end of the republic and during the empire. Some coins from these later periods, however, lacked inscriptions or had legends consisting of a single word, while on rare occasions reverses featured only text (fig. 119).<sup>23</sup>

Thus, when Julius was commissioning medals in the early Cinquecento, no set of rules existed for the deployment of text. The use of inscriptions, and the way they were supposed to be read, was anything but consistent. Such freedom allowed by the openness of the genre must have been appealing to artists and patrons alike. The medal was a malleable art form that could be adapted to fit the needs of the patron, and these circumstances provided an opportunity for artists to showcase their skills and ingenuity.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., cats. 225, 226, 228, 229, 866, 867, 868, and 877.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., cats. 38 and 388.

<sup>22</sup> R.A.G. Carson, *Principal Coins of the Romans: Volume I (The Republic, c. 290-31 BC)* (London: British Museum Publications Limited, 1978), passim, esp. 9-46.

<sup>23</sup> Carson, Volume I, passim, esp. 47-81. A coin issued by Agrippa in Cisalpine Gaul had no image on the reverse. Some bronze coins issued by Claudius featured only text on the reverses. Carson Volume I, cat. 304. Carson, Volume II, passim, esp. 8-88. See also Harold Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, Volume I (London, British Museum, 1923), plates 18-19.

## Understanding Text-Image Relationships in Renaissance Portrait Medals

Two factors crucial to understanding text-image relationships in medals are the relative scale of words to pictures and the nature of the placement of words on medals. The easiest way to illustrate these points is by comparing medals to other media. An apt comparison is the Stanza della Segnatura, since it was commissioned by the same patron, and it coincides chronologically with many of the pope's medals (figs. 7-12). Furthermore, the room has frescoed text on the ceiling and each of the four walls, and it was supposed to function as the pope's library, so it provides fertile ground for literary and pictorial comparisons.<sup>24</sup>

While text is featured throughout the Stanza, it is much more prominent on portrait medals because of the scale of the linguistic content in relation to the iconography. The reverse of the TVTELA medal, for example, features only one word, but each letter is approximately the size of the head of the seated shepherd (fig. 62). The relative scale of text on the reverse of the IVRI REDD medal is even more extreme (fig. 58). In this context a single alphabetical character is higher than the first story of what is supposed to be an enormous fortress. In Raphael's *Disputa*, books are scattered around the altar with their titles mostly legible, while putti levitating beneath Christ hold the four Gospels (fig. 9).

In absolute terms the letters in the *Disputa* are much larger than those on the medals, but in relation to the rest of the fresco they are significantly smaller. A rough estimate indicates that each letter is about the size of a finger of an individual in the scene, and the height of a single letter is about one hundredth the height of the entire fresco. The height of a letter in the medals is approximately one tenth the diameter of each of the objects.

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<sup>24</sup> Christiane Joost-Gaugier, *Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura: Meaning and Invention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1-16.

Placement of text in medals commands the viewer's attention. An exergual inscription would be tantamount to an epigraph scrawled across the central stairs within the fresco. This comparative analysis might seem obvious, but to my knowledge no scholar has articulated the formal terms of the prominence of text in medals. Although my comparisons were subjectively chosen, they illuminate the priorities of each genre.

Another reason for the extreme prominence of text in medals, and its relative subtlety in frescoes, was the manner in which linguistic elements were inserted into each medium. Text was included in frescoes as part of the fiction. The titles were rendered on the books in slight perspective and in a style that mimicked actual book decoration. Julius's name also appears twice on the altar cloth in the center of the wall painting, but the wording is somewhat camouflaged since it was rendered as part of the embroidery (fig. 120).<sup>25</sup> Additional text was included in a similar illusory manner in the room's other frescoes.

In sharp contrast, linguistic messages were arbitrarily inserted into medals rather than being insinuated into illusions.<sup>26</sup> Words were not located in space, nor were they part of any sort of visual fiction. Despite employing mimesis and naturalism in the modeling of figures, the rendering of space within medals did not rely on perspectival conventions; instead it formed its own idiom. These conventions were not unique to medals, but they were specific to numismatic

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<sup>25</sup> IV-LI-VS is on the middle of the cloth and IV-LI-IV II PO-NT MA-X is rendered across the top edge of the cloth. Ingrid Rowland, "The Vatican Stanze," in *The Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. Marcia Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 99-103.

<sup>26</sup> There are some rare exceptions in which text was not arbitrarily added to medals. Occasionally phrases were rendered on objects within the field. The date, for example, was cast in relief on a pillar within the scene on the reverse of Pisanello's medal of Leonello d'Este. This trope mimics one used in painting. Hill, cat. 32.

media. Coins from antiquity through the Renaissance employed a similar system of internal logic for the juxtapositioning of words and pictures.<sup>27</sup>

A number of conventions that governed the production and reception of portrait medals dictated that they were free from the illusionistic constructions that often informed paintings, especially painted portraits, from the same period. Foremost among these was the setting. Portraits on the obverses of medals rendered the sitter in strict profile against a blank backdrop, as was the case with all of Julius's medals. Painted portraits, on the other hand, whether profile, frontal, or three-quarters view, often depicted the sitter in a fictive setting, sometimes by placing the figure in front of a detailed background. Piero della Francesca's portraits of Federico da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza, for example, placed the figures before a sprawling landscape (fig. 121), while Justus of Ghent portrayed Pope Sixtus IV as if he were seated in a small room next to a Corinthian column and in front of a patterned curtain (fig. 122).<sup>28</sup> Parapets, windowsills, and other devices were frequently used to further orient the sitter and develop a fictive, spatial relationship between the viewer and the sitter, as in Antonello da Messina's *Condottiere* from 1475 (fig. 123).<sup>29</sup> The subject in Antonello's painting was clearly intended to be perceived as existing behind the parapet with the viewer located in front of this divider.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Francesco Muntoni, *Le monete dei papi e degli stati pontifici, Volume I* (Roma: P. and P. Santamaria, 1972), passim. Carson, Volume II, passim.

<sup>28</sup> John Pope-Hennessy, *The Portrait in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 60.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 88-89.

<sup>30</sup> Sculpted portraits did not typically have the type of illusionistic settings of painted portraits, yet the perception of these works still differed greatly from that of portrait medals. Both portrait busts and full-length sculpted portraits existed in the same space and often on the same scale as the viewer. Such characteristics greatly differentiated these works from the low-relief and diminutive nature of portrait medals. Sculptures were not designed with the rigidity of medallion profiles either. Even at the inception of the genre, three-dimensional portrait busts were imbued with life, the potential for movement, and the illusion of interaction with the viewer; qualities absent from portrait medals. The earliest independent secular portrait bust in the Renaissance is believed to be Mino da Fiesole's *Piero de' Medici* from 1453. Despite its truncation the sculpture was not rendered as a lifeless memorialization of the sitter. Rather, the life-sized work depicted Piero with his head turned as if reacting to another person, possibly the

No such devices were used in Renaissance medals. The portraits and accompanying inscriptions were not intended to be perceived as located in any spatial or temporal setting. In a period when some of the most significant artistic developments involved the illusionistic rendering of space, medallion portraits were completely devoid of these trappings. The surfaces of medals were divorced from any sort of reality-based location, as the sitter was not supposed to be in a room, or overlooking his dominion, or in any particular place. There was no “where” in these objects. The words and the images lacked “spatial syntax” and the setting was simply the obverse of the medal.<sup>31</sup> The text and the portrait were part of the medal’s surface and they were meant to be read as such.

A viewer was not supposed to perceive the surface of the object as a window or an extension of his or her own space, as was the case with paintings, nor was the image supposed to share space with the viewer, as did sculptures in the round. Instead, the characteristics of a medal called attention to the work of art as an object. It was held by the viewer, rotated, touched, and handed to others. Unlike many illusionistic images, the pictorial and linguistic content of the medal was not self-effacing, but self-affirming.<sup>32</sup> The fact that portrait medals were often produced in three different materials—gold, silver, and bronze—further heightened

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viewer. Such animated qualities must also have been present in Michelangelo’s now destroyed full-length sculpture of Pope Julius II from 1506. This work was on the facade of the church of San Petronio in Bologna, clutching a sword in one hand and blessing on-lookers with the other hand. Sculptures such as these existed in the space of the viewer and were presumably intended to evoke reactions, at least on some cognitive level, similar to those of an actual person sharing the viewer’s space. Marc Bormand and Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi, eds., *Desiderio da Settignano: Sculptor of Renaissance Florence*, (Milan: 5 Continents, 2007), 128-29. Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 203.

<sup>31</sup> Barkan, *Michelangelo*, 84.

<sup>32</sup> The ultimate examples of self-effacing works of art are the paintings in the famous “birds of Zeuxis” story. Zeuxis supposedly painted grapes so real that birds pecked at them. His rival, Parrhasius, asked Zeuxis to pull aside a curtain to reveal his painting. Zeuxis attempted to do so, only to discover that the curtain was a painted illusion. Bryson, *Word and Image*, 8. Victor Ieronim Stoichiță, *The Self-aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-painting* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3-10.



one's awareness of the objective status of the work of art.<sup>33</sup> The object was manufactured so that the viewer was aware of its physical qualities. I would indeed propose that the material can be interpreted as an index of the object's own existence.

Medallic reverses occasionally employed limited spatial modeling. On the CENTVM CELLE medal, for example, the fortress was rendered using an elevated viewpoint, but the scene did not strictly adhere to the rules of single-point perspective (fig. 55). What is more, letters share the space of the building. They float in the sky above the castle without any border or line of demarcation, yet the inscription was not supposed to be interpreted as levitating over the fortress like some sort of sky-writing. Medals clearly had their own rules for conveying visual data, and the insertion of text made this fact all the more apparent. A medal was essentially a Renaissance collage of text, emblem, portrait, and ground that required specific visual and cognitive skills.<sup>34</sup> A Modernist collage by Picasso or Braque was constructed, for among other reasons, to cause viewers to question conventions of space and representation by drawing a viewer's attention to the various planes and the blank ground within the work of art (fig. 124).<sup>35</sup> The Renaissance viewer, on the other hand, was supposed to accept the numismatic conventions with which he was undoubtedly familiar from ancient and Renaissance coinage, while cognitively embracing the objective status of the portrait medal.

The arbitrary placement of text prevented coherence within the visual field that comprised the surface of a medal. The nature of the deployment of inscriptions was disruptive,

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<sup>33</sup> Graham Pollard, Eleonora Luciano, and Maria Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: Volume One, Italy, The Collection of the National Gallery of Art, Systematic Catalogue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), xv-xxxvi.

<sup>34</sup> Wilde, 11.

<sup>35</sup> Rosalind Krauss's discussion of surface, space, depth, and representation puts some of the elements of the surface of a portrait medal in perspective, especially when she stated, "What collage achieves, then, is a metalanguage of the visual. It can talk about space without employing it." Rosalind Krauss, "In the Name of Picasso," *October* 16, (1981), 19-21.

and it resulted in adding prominence to the linguistic message.<sup>36</sup> Text was not simply one of many elements incorporated into a scene, as was the case in painting. Instead text was discrete from images. The conventions of numismatic media caused the linguistic elements of the artwork to grab the viewer's attention, thereby dictating how the objects were to be read. A dichotomy was established within a medal since its surface could not be interpreted as a coherent and logical whole. Each side of the artwork had two parts, words and pictures, and each commanded significant portions of the viewer's attention. As one of two distinct entities, text typically received as much attention as the images, despite occupying significantly less space. Inscriptions were thus allowed to play a dominant role within medals, guiding viewers in their interpretations of the often-ambiguous iconographic content.

### **Semiotics and Portrait Medals**

Underlying my approach to text and images is the understanding that not all images functioned in the same way, nor did all text operate in a unified manner. Additionally, text and images were two distinct systems of encoding messages and they were not meant to be read by viewers in the same fashion. This final assertion diverges from the theories of Mieke Bal. In *Reading Rembrandt* she stated, "the culture in which works of art and literature emerge and function does not impose a strict distinction between the verbal and the visual domain. In cultural life, the two domains are constantly intertwined." She went on to argue that there are only "artificial boundaries" between word and image.<sup>37</sup> I agree that the boundaries are artificial

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<sup>36</sup> Attempts by modern and postmodern painters to emphasize flatness and call attention to the surface have been interpreted as both self-referential and self-effacing. In the case of Renaissance portrait medals I argue that intentional emphasis of the surface and materiality of the object is thoroughly self-referential. David Joselit, "Notes on Surface: toward a genealogy of flatness," *Art History* 23, no. 1 (2000), 19-20.

<sup>37</sup> Mieke Bal, *Reading Rembrandt: Beyond the Word-Image Opposition* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 1991, 5 and 398.

as well as arbitrary, but they nevertheless have practical implications. The aforementioned text-image dichotomy prevents all of the data on a medal from functioning as part of one continuous system.

While I largely disagree with Bal's claims, she made an important point. Every sign is a human invention intended for human consumption. Different types of signs, however, have different codes, follow various rules, and transmit a variety of types of information. Looking at specific examples from Julius's corpus, I focus on how words and pictures connote or denote, and I examine factors such as seriality and syntax to determine how medals were read. The boundary between linguistic and iconographic elements within medals was nebulous and occasionally porous, but I maintain that it exists nonetheless.

### **Text and Images on Portrait Medal Obverses**

The linguistic and iconographic elements on the obverses of Julius's medals initially appear redundant because each work of art includes a profile portrait of the pontiff along with his name and title. The words as well as the images identify a particular individual holding a specific position, yet the different types of signs function in a variety of ways while reinforcing the information in the opposing system. Simply put, a picture of Julius in papal attire did not communicate the same information as did an inscription that provided his name and title.

From one perspective the text acted as a control that operated on the image. The words dictated how the viewer read the visual content of the obverse.<sup>38</sup> Instead of the profile being perceived as any pope or as a generic ecclesiastical figure, the specificity of the inscription ensured that the viewer knew it was an image of Pope Julius II. Bryson's statement that

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<sup>38</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 1.

“language enormously shapes and delimits our reception of images,” certainly holds true for the obverses of portrait medals.<sup>39</sup>

Roland Barthes also discussed the function of linguistic content in relation to iconography. He characterized images as polysemous, and “underlying their signifiers,” he claimed, was “a ‘floating chain’ of signifieds.” Language was one device used to “*fix* the floating chain of signifieds” so as to “counter the terror of uncertain signs.”<sup>40</sup> Obverse inscriptions did not simply duplicate information in the pictures, as the apparent redundancy offered true functionality. Text helped anchor meaning in an image through the exactitude available in linguistic signs, thereby virtually guaranteeing the transmission of the pope’s identity. This had practical implications since the information that followed needed to relate to the sitter as an individual. All connotations of strength, regality, justice, and piety would be worthless if the viewer did not know that they were related to Pope Julius II.

The convention of including identifying text with a portrait was based on the many Roman imperial coins that featured both the image and name of the emperor.<sup>41</sup> For coins and medals it was not a matter of duplication since the images and inscriptions transmitted different data. Written signs offered precision, but pictorial signs could convey much more information than could an epigraph. Through the rendering of physiognomic details an artist transmitted an extraordinary amount of data. On Julius’s medals the viewer was greeted with subtly snarled

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>40</sup> Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 37-39. Evelyn Welch, “Naming Names: The Transience of Individual Identity in Fifteenth-Century Italian Portraiture,” in *The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance*, eds. Nicholas Mann and Luke Syson (London: British Museum Press, 1998), 91-95.

<sup>41</sup> Carson, Volume II, passim.

lips, folds of skin, tufts of hair, and wrinkles around the eyes. All of this visual information was supposed to be read as specific to an individual.

The renderings employed artistic conventions and were a form of visual fiction, but because they included naturalistic details they were convincing and appeared to convey true likenesses.<sup>42</sup> Bryson offered a parallel argument in his characterization of single-point perspective, stating, “perspective persuades because it creates a particular sign-format which is intrinsically persuasive; persuasive, rather than true.”<sup>43</sup> Similarly, the excess of visual information in the portraits lulled viewers into believing that the medals were expressions of truth.<sup>44</sup>

According to Nagel and Wood, images in the Renaissance were often perceived as more reliable than the written word, since texts could easily be forged. Different mechanisms were used to produce and interpret linguistic and iconographic data. Pictures were not subjected to the same philological critiques that were applied to written documents. Words, however, were valued and trusted for their ability to accurately label and identify images while eliminating any hint of ambiguity.<sup>45</sup> Since medals incorporated both literary and visual content, an artist could shore up the weakness of one sign system by using the opposing system. In doing so he could create a mutually reinforcing message that the patron trusted for the perpetuation of his persona.

Text on the obverses of medals simultaneously operated on multiple levels. The ability for an inscription to overtly label and identify the sitter was part of its denotative function, but

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<sup>42</sup> Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 253-54.

<sup>43</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 20.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-12.

<sup>45</sup> Both text and the images on coins, however, were regarded as more trustworthy than other forms of text and images since they had been publicly issued and had theoretically been scrutinized by many people, including public officials. Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic*, 241-46.

obverse inscriptions could also connote and operate symbolically.<sup>46</sup> In this second capacity the linguistic content communicated more abstract messages such as strength or piety, many of which were discussed in previous chapters.<sup>47</sup> The inscriptions were loaded with meaning through the drawn-out manner in which they enumerated the various facets of the pope's name and title.<sup>48</sup> The obverse of one medal reads IVLIVS SECVNDVS PONTIFEX MAXI (fig. 58) while another reads IVLIVS LIGVR PAPA SECVNDVS (fig. 49).<sup>49</sup> Nearly all of the obverse inscriptions are permutations of similar phrases. They were not rendered in the vernacular, nor did they resemble quotidian uses of language. The text was stylized rather than straightforward, and the style evoked inscriptions on Roman imperial coins as well as those on ancient and Renaissance buildings. The obverse inscriptions denoted Julius's identity, but they connoted "secondary attributes" of the ruler.<sup>50</sup>

Proper names have traditionally been viewed as limited by the extreme specificity of the message they were perceived as being able to convey. Labeling an individual appeared to exhaust their meaning, and they seemed to be unable to transcend the one-to-one relationship between signifier and signified. More recently, however, scholars have argued that names include meaning beyond the identification of a particular person.<sup>51</sup> Because of their capacities to

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<sup>46</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 37. Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*, trans. Anette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 89-92.

<sup>47</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 16-17.

<sup>48</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 26-27.

<sup>49</sup> Hill, cats. 225 and 659.

<sup>50</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 16.

<sup>51</sup> Krauss, "Picasso," 8-10. In rare cases, such as the obverses that identify Julius as ARCIS FVNDAT, the inscriptions explicitly transgress the bounds of his name and title to include more information about the sitter. Hill, cats. 224, 226, and 227.

express denotative and connotative meaning, I support a similar polysemic view of Julius's obverse inscriptions.

### **Denotation and Connotation in Reverse Inscriptions**

Here I examine how inscriptions on particular reverses were able to serve denotative and connotative functions in relation to the iconography. I also explore how the text was partially freed from traditional constraints of language and operated more like images, while still standing in opposition to pictorial content. I will not comprehensively address the reverses, but rather look at some of the most poignant and innovative interactions between the two sign systems within Julius's corpus.

The reverse inscription on the CIVITA VECHIA medal primarily denoted aspects of the picture (fig. 51).<sup>52</sup> The epigraph provided nothing more than the name of the town, thereby labeling the image and conveying a straightforward message. It essentially proclaimed, "this is an image of the fortress in Civitavecchia." The message was not encoded and no deciphering was necessary. I propose that the terse nature of the inscription allowed the image to function in a connotative capacity. By not burdening the viewer with other linguistic messages, the image was free to operate symbolically. The iconography could express all of the connotations related to fortresses that were discussed in the previous chapter. The reverse image could be read as reflective of Julius's dominion, his steadfast character, and his attempts to strengthen the defenses of the Papal States.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Hill, cat. 224. Bryson, *Word and Image*, 16. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 20, 37.

<sup>53</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 16.

The reverse inscription on two of the Palace of Justice medals did not label the image, but it did anchor meaning in the picture (figs. 58-59).<sup>54</sup> With the phrase, IVRI REDD, the epigraph stated that law was being restored. The linguistic message was coded, but its general meaning was easily decipherable. A reference to the legal realm indicated that the picture showed the Palace of Justice and not a generic fortress, thus a viewer could have a fixed reading of the image.

As in the CIVITA VECHIA medal, the short inscription allowed the iconography to dominate the reverse and connote the many symbolic meanings associated with fortresses. Despite these similarities, the two inscriptions differed in another respect. The text on the CIVITA VECHIA medal was extremely specific and therefore limited in the scope of what it was able to communicate. Its meaning was non-transferable, and it referred to little more than a particular location.<sup>55</sup> By contrast, the somewhat vague nature of phrase IVRI REDD connoted Julius's role in restoring law while alluding to one of his general characteristics as a sovereign figure.<sup>56</sup>

The inscription on the TVTELA medals did not label the reverse image nor did it denote the content; instead it functioned in a solely connotative capacity (figs. 61-62).<sup>57</sup> Unlike the CIVITA VECHIA and IVRI REDD medals, this text was not needed to identify the image. The shepherd and his flock were immediately recognizable from iconographic clues. Moreover, it was not supposed to be a particular individual, but a general rendering of a shepherd. A similarly unspecific inscription reinforced the anonymous nature of the figure.

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<sup>54</sup> Hill, cats. 225 and 226. Barthes, *Image-Music-Text*, 39.

<sup>55</sup> Krauss, "Picasso," 8.

<sup>56</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 16-17. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 24-39.

<sup>57</sup> Hill, cats. 228 and 229.



Barthes's theories accurately characterized the text-image relationship of the TVTELA reverse. He wrote, "the linguistic message no longer guides identification but interpretation," and it "orientates the reading towards a more flattering signified."<sup>58</sup> The scene would have conveyed meaning to a Renaissance viewer without any inscription, but appending the term "Guardianship" to the reverse emphasized particular connotations of the image. It caused the viewer to focus on the pontiff's role as a protector, even though the image was loaded with priestly connotations that it could have conveyed without any text. The brief inscription enabled the artist to more deftly express a message while maintaining some degree of control over its reception.

Beyond traditional connoting and denoting, I propose that one and two-word reverse inscriptions functioned in a different manner than did longer texts. The consumption of lengthy prose, or even more extensive medallic inscriptions such as those on the Scorpion medal (fig. 69) and Camelio's medal (fig. 44), involved a linear reading of text. By contrast, extremely short inscriptions could be read, and their meaning digested, with a cursory glance. The TVTELA inscription, for example, was not processed in the same way as was a verse from the Bible. Unlike lengthier inscriptions that took longer to process, the information in a single word was almost immediately available to the viewer.<sup>59</sup> It was like a burst of information, rather a linear train of data requiring gradual consumption.

Due to the manner in which their meaning could be intuited, I propose that one or two-word inscriptions functioned like word-emblems. As such they were not subject to all the rules of language. They expressed meaning in relation to the accompanying image and the medal as a

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<sup>58</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 39-40.

<sup>59</sup> Baxandall articulated how images were read differently than were texts. Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 2-4.

whole, and not in relation to other words in a sentence. Short inscriptions were not dependent on syntax or seriality, thus they functioned figurally rather than discursively.<sup>60</sup> Bryson pointed out that the mind operates using images rather than the arbitrary conventions of language, and I would argue that brief inscriptions played into the tendency for the brain to process information in a simultaneous and figural manner. One or two words in a visual field could maintain the “sensory charge” of a picture that was lost in longer texts.<sup>61</sup>

Occupying a conceptual space between the linguistic and iconographic realms, these word-emblems challenge our understanding of the text-image dichotomy. They illustrate that language can function in a similar manner to images, yet even inscriptions composed of a single word still follow many of the rules created for linguistic content.<sup>62</sup> While word-emblems are processed differently than other types of text, they are not intuited in precisely the same manner as are images.

### **The Blacksmith Medal: Lacking Text or Image as Text?**

Only one medal from Julius’s corpus, the Blacksmith medal, did not have an inscription on the reverse (fig. 60).<sup>63</sup> Instead of being filled with an admixture of words and pictures, the visual field was dominated by an image of the Palace of Justice, while a blacksmith wielding a

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<sup>60</sup> Word order in Latin indicated emphasis rather than meaning. Latin words acquired meaning in relation to other words in a sentence, which was not the case in one or two-word inscriptions. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 24-25. Bryson, *Word and Image*, 20-21.

<sup>61</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 179-80.

<sup>62</sup> Words are still composed of alphabetical characters and they still adhere to normal phonetic rules. None of these rules ever apply to images.

<sup>63</sup> Hill, cat. 227.

hammer above an anvil, and a personification of Justice, were located in the foreground.<sup>64</sup> The absence of any linguistic element is rather conspicuous, and I propose that the two figures were supposed to stand in for an inscription. Because of the genre's typical conventions, the lack of text exhorted the viewer to read the images as if they were words.<sup>65</sup>

The two figures did not duplicate the primary image, but instead they denoted its identity and anchored meaning in it.<sup>66</sup> By embodying the concept of justice they allowed the viewer to read the structure as a specific building, in the same way that the CIVITA VECHIA inscription identified the picture as a particular fortress. The figures conveyed identifying information, but they failed to connote broader meaning. Unlike the IVRI REDD inscription, which alluded to the notion that Julius was returning justice to Rome and the Papal States, the images were connotatively inert and performed no other expressive function.<sup>67</sup>

I propose that the limited role was due to the sparse manner in which the blacksmith and personification of Justice were rendered. The figures were visually concise and devoid of all but the most essential details. A viewer could decipher nothing about the images other than their

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<sup>64</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 1 in the text at note 167, the blacksmith has connotations of justice and uprightness that date to antiquity. Blacksmith imagery was actually quite uncommon in Renaissance scenes related to justice. The Blacksmith could have alluded to the sword held by the figure of Justice, or it could have been a reference to St. Michael who was always shown holding a sword. The St. Michael connection makes sense since the Archangel is associated with fortresses, most famously with the Castel Sant'Angelo. E. S. Whittlesey, *Symbols and Legends in Western Art: A Museum Guide* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972), 239. Sarah Carr-Gomm, *The Dictionary of Symbols in Western Art* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1995), 150. George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), 168-69.

<sup>65</sup> Gombrich discussed the "primacy of genres," and he argued that art historians must understand the conventions of a genre in order to properly interpret a work of art. Gombrich, 5-7. Wilde, 11.

<sup>66</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 38-39.

<sup>67</sup> Hill, cats. 225 and 226.

basic identity as emblems. Conveying a small amount of data, the concise style meant that the information within the figures was fully exhausted by their textual function.<sup>68</sup>

The blacksmith and Justice were essentially pictorial substitutes for text, akin to hieroglyphs. They aided only in a discursive reading of the medal and not in a figural reading.<sup>69</sup> They were not participating in a narrative or interacting with one another. Much like words, the figures were discrete units of information. I maintain the existence of a text-image dichotomy, but the Blacksmith medal was a rare case in which the image came extremely close to functioning as text.<sup>70</sup>

### **Different Uses of Text with Similar Iconography**

Two of Julius's portrait medals featured scenes relating to Peace and Justice (figs. 48-49).<sup>71</sup> Both of the medals were produced by Gian Cristoforo Romano, and despite the shared subject matter and artist, the use of text in the two works of art differed greatly. The reverse of the cast medal shows personifications of Peace and Fortune holding hands, and the scene is circumscribed by the inscription, IVSTITIAE PACIS FIDEIQ RECVPERATOR, "Recoverer of Justice, Peace, and Faith." Strangely the three concepts mentioned in the epigraph are not those illustrated. An olive-branch-wielding figure of Peace, and Fortune with a rudder in her arm and

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<sup>68</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 10-13.

<sup>69</sup> According to Bryson, a hieroglyph can be defined as a visual sign that functions by "converting discourse into image." Bryson, *Word and Image*, 27, 179-82. Barkan described a hieroglyph as "the place where picture and writing intersect." Barkan, *Michelangelo*, 7.

<sup>70</sup> The content of the Blacksmith medal strengthens claims by some practitioners of semiotics that pictures can act like language and language like pictures. However, I disagree that the two classes of signs function in precisely the same manner. Using images instead of words would have caused the viewer to take pause in a way that language would not have. The images also lacked the linearity of text. The figures functioned in a very similar manner to word-emblems. W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 3-5. Bal, *Reading Rembrandt*, 5 and 398.

<sup>71</sup> Hill, cats. 222 and 877.

foot on a globe, stand above a flaming tripod.<sup>72</sup> The text effectively acts as a title for the sitter on the opposite side of medal while only partially clarifying the iconography that it circumscribes. That the scene was not completely comprehensible to Renaissance viewers is evident in a 1507 letter from Jacopo d'Atri to Isabella d'Este. He describes the image as *due figure et un sacrificio che ad judicio*, “two figures and a sacrifice to the judgment.”<sup>73</sup> The text apparently tipped off Jacopo that the scene dealt with judgment and justice, since no scales or other implements associated with the principle are present, while the identities of the two individuals, on the other hand, were not clear to him.

The play between literary and visual elements on the reverse is reminiscent of Barthes's comments about the interrelation of text and image. He wrote, “there is never a real incorporation [of words into a picture] since the substances of the two structures (graphic and iconic) are irreducible.”<sup>74</sup> Barthes went on to theorize, however, that text was used to make a particular message explicit in an image, and occasionally it functioned to retroactively project meaning into the visual realm. The inscription on the reverse of the medal in fig. 48 overlaid meaning on the image, while simultaneously attributing qualities to the sitter on the opposite side of the object. Thus the epigram did not act as a label, but instead as a means of characterizing the image in a general manner. It allowed a vague scene to be more comprehensible than it otherwise would have been without the inscription. Transmission of the message was imperfect,

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<sup>72</sup> Weiss, “Julius,” 172.

<sup>73</sup> The full quote reads, *due figure et un sacrificio che ad judicio de ogni intelligente alli boni antichi se po comparar*. Roberto Weiss, “The Medals of Pope Julius II (1503-1513),” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 172. Weiss quoted from A. Venturi, “Gian Cristoforo Romano,” *Archivio storico dell'arte*, I (1888), 151, n. 2.

<sup>74</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 25-27.

however, because two non-compatible sign systems were operating in conjunction with one another.<sup>75</sup>

The intended relationship between text and image was unclear. The concepts in the inscription (Peace, Justice, and Faith) and those illustrated (Peace and Fortune) were not contradictory. However, it must have seemed peculiar to the sixteenth-century viewer that the inscription and the iconography were not fully aligned. The artist may have been exploiting the indeterminacy of signs that allowed for further interpretations by viewers. This was likely the case, as some of the pontiff's medals were meant to characterize Julius in a general manner rather than to commemorate specific events.<sup>76</sup> Unlike the obverses, here text and image did not provide redundancy, but instead permitted an expansion and proliferation of meanings and associations. Portrait medals, after all, were not legal documents that needed to be carefully parsed by contemporary viewers; rather they were valued for their beauty and inventiveness.

The struck medal of Peace initially appears quite similar to the cast medal, but closer analysis reveals that each reverse was composed in a radically different manner. Figures of Peace and Justice, or *Aequitas*, were rendered on the struck medal (fig. 49). The personifications were not explicitly identified, and the only text on the reverse was the two-word exergual inscription, OSCVLATE SVNT. This was a reference to the phrase *justitia et pax osculatae sunt*, "Justice and Peace havekissed," which is a portion of Psalms 84:11.<sup>77</sup> The inscription functioned to clarify the iconography, but only if the viewer knew the verse from which the allusion was made. By contrast the reverse inscription on Julius's other medal of peace,

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<sup>75</sup> Meyer Schapiro discussed a similar compatibility and incompatibility of the visual and the literary in various biblical scenes. Meyer Schapiro, *Words, Script, and Pictures: Semiotics of Visual Language* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1996), 11-16.

<sup>76</sup> Krauss, "Picasso," 21.

<sup>77</sup> The full verse reads, "Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have kissed," *Misericordia et veritas obviaverunt sibi; justitia et pax osculatae sunt*.

“Recoverer of Justice, Peace, and Faith,” is self-contained and comprehensible without knowledge of a specific literary source.

Language was clearly employed to very different ends on the reverse of the struck medal of Peace. OSCVLATE SVNT or “have kissed” communicates little on its own, and it served no labeling function for the image. The scene was instead a clue to the source of the text, and the full Bible verse provided more information that could be applied to the image. Armed with this knowledge, a second reading of the object could be undertaken in which each figure functioned as a rebus. The words “Justice and Peace” appear nowhere on the medal, yet, echoing the psalm, Justice and Peace were depicted embracing via their clasped hands as if they had just kissed.

The artist constructed the reverse so that the two sign systems were virtually equated. For an informed viewer, one system was allowed to seamlessly flow into the other. The cast medal of Peace, by contrast, listed three concepts, only one of which was unambiguously illustrated, while the image and text could not be read in a linear fashion. The differing uses of language are noteworthy. In neither instance are the figures explicitly identified by the wording, but in the struck medal the artist created a type of numismatic word game that would have appealed to courtly circles that comprised the medal’s intended audience.

In *The Book of the Courtier* the participants in the dialogue engage in games and witty banter. The fictional conversation even included the medalist and sculptor, Gian Cristforo Romano, and it was supposed to have occurred the day after Julius departed Urbino as he made his way from Bologna to Rome.<sup>78</sup> Considering his insider status, the charismatic Castiglione may have even handled the struck medal of Peace. This work of art is not the only example of a

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<sup>78</sup> Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier: The Singleton Translation*, ed. Daniel Javitch (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002), 12-15, I.4-8. Peter Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione’s Cortegiano* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 5-18. J.R. Woodhouse, *Baldesar Castiglione: A Reassessment of The Courtier* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1978), 89.

Renaissance rebus. Michelangelo playfully experimented with linguistic and pictorial signs in two hand-written letters in which images stood in for words.<sup>79</sup>

The clever wordplay on the medal may have been inspired by ancient Roman currency. It was commonplace in the first century BC for a coin's reverse imagery to include a visual pun that alluded to the family name of the moneyer. A coin issued by Aquillius Florus featured a flower on the reverse and a coin of Q. Voconius Vitulus had an image of a calf (figs. 125-26). In both cases viewers would have been aware of the punning nature of the imagery since the moneyer's name was included as part of the reverse inscription.<sup>80</sup> Nothing as complex as Gian Cristoforo's puzzle-like allusion to a text occurred on antique coinage, which was probably due to the larger and less literate audience for whom the coins were intended.

The resulting effect of employing a rebus is more than a simple one-to-one substitution of a picture for a word. Besides allowing for an appreciation of the artist's ingenuity, the image is more evocative than the text. The forms of the images of Peace and Justice on the medal evoke antiquity and the grandeur of imperial Rome. These connotations were not part of the biblical passage; thus the pictorial nature of the rebus enabled an inscription to carry more meaning than a strictly text-based inscription could have.

In composing the reverse it appears that the artist went out of his way to show off his cleverness. The entire phrase, *justitia et pax osculatae sunt*, "Justice and Peace have kissed," could easily have been included on the medal. A significantly longer epigraph appears on a

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<sup>79</sup> Barkan, *Michelangelo*, 77-80.

<sup>80</sup> Several other coins with visual puns have been identified, including one of L. Appuleius Saturninus that depicts Saturn in a quadriga, a coin of C. Vibius Pansa with the mask of Pan, and one of L. Plaetorius Cestianus with an athlete holding a cestus. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "Image and Authority in the Coinage of Augustus," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 76, (1986): 77-78. Eugene S. McCartney, "Canting Puns on Ancient Monuments," *American Journal of Archaeology* 23, no. 1 (1919): 59-62. See also Mattingly, *Coins*, Volume I, 9, plate 2.5.



smaller medal produced by the same artist for the same patron (fig. 69).<sup>81</sup> Opting for the abbreviated inscription, the scene was carefully composed so as to encourage the viewer to read it from top to bottom in a linear fashion. The two sign systems were so acutely aligned that little ambiguity remained once the riddle was solved. The cast medal of Peace, on the other hand, was much more open to a variety of readings and potential misinterpretations despite the fact that it included a longer inscription.

The results appear to confirm Leonardo da Vinci's theory about the use of text in conjunction with images. The Renaissance polymath wrote, "And you who wish to use words to reveal the shape of man with all aspects of his articulation, abandon any such expectation, because the more minutely you do your description, the more you will confuse the mind of the reader and the more the reader will lose any recognition of the thing you are describing."<sup>82</sup>

Leonardo's statement rings true in relation to Julius's medals of Peace, but it strangely contradicts the xenophobic pages of his notebooks that are often crammed with hundreds of words. The two medals of Peace indicate that images did not dictate the text on a medal, and text-image relationships can greatly differ even if iconographic elements were relatively constant.

### **Text and the Scorpion Medal**

The text-image relationship in the Scorpion medal, another work by Gian Cristoforo Romano, was also quite inventive (fig. 69). As in the medals of Peace, this was not a

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<sup>81</sup> The scorpion medal, also made by Gian Cristoforo Romano, was only 26 mm in diameter, while the struck medal of Peace was 36 mm in diameter. Despite being the smallest medal commissioned by Julius the scorpion medal had a long inscription. It reads, *NOLLO MORTEN PECATORIS SED MAGIS CONVERTATVR ET VIVAT*, "I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live." Hill, cat. 873.

<sup>82</sup> Barkan, *Michelangelo*, 19-20. As quoted by Barkan from *Scritti scelti di Leonardo da Vinci* (London 1883), cat. 77.

straightforward case of the inscription labeling the image. The reverse included a rendering of an animal and a constellation, yet the inscription mentioned neither. The viewer was forced to posit a connection between the iconographic and the textual components of the medal. The inscription was an excerpt of a Bible verse, and it was more than extensive enough to point the viewer to the full passage. The epigram reads, “I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live.”<sup>83</sup>

The medal was carefully coded and required significant deciphering, perhaps more so than any other commissioned by the pontiff. The inscription did not serve a denotative function in relation to the iconography. No labeling occurred, and neither facet of the reverse explicitly identified the content in the other sign system. Rather, the text and the image obliquely indicated how the other should be interpreted. It appears that each sign system emphasized secondary characteristics in the opposing system. In doing so, the symbolic message, and not the literal one, was made available to the viewer.<sup>84</sup>

The text and the image seem unrelated, but they were carefully intertwined while also closely connected to the sitter on the obverse. Julius’s implied position in relation to the cosmos was an integral part of the medal’s message. The artist went out of his way to stress this aspect, perhaps because it would not have been obvious without visual markers. The astrological message originated in the iconography, not in the text. The scorpion was overlaid with stars, and the celestial bodies extend beyond the field and into the border. The artist employed five-pointed

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<sup>83</sup> The entire verse states “Say to them: As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: and why will you die, O house of Israel?” *Dic ad eos: Vivo ego, dicit Dominus Deus, nolo mortem impii, sed ut convertatur impius a via sua, et vivat. Convertimini, convertimini a viis vestris pessimis; et quare moriemini, domus Israel?* Hill, cat. 873.

<sup>84</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 16-17. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 26-27, 35-36.

stars as stops between the words, which were identical to those in the constellation. Typically dots or small triangles were used as stops or markers between each of the words.

Prior to Julius, only one patron had commissioned medals in which stars were incorporated into the inscription. Cast in the mid-1470s, two medals of Costanzo Sforza, Lord of Pesaro, featured stops similar to those on the Scorpion medal; however, they seemed to be nothing more than a decorative flourish and were unrelated to the content of the reverses (fig. 127).<sup>85</sup> Gian Cristoforo appears to have independently invented the motif. Two medals commissioned by a minor patron such as Costanzo, produced more than thirty years earlier, would likely not have been known to the Roman artist.<sup>86</sup> The content of the Scorpion medal was truly inventive considering that stars never appeared in any coin inscriptions from antiquity.<sup>87</sup>

The stars in the border furthered the message of the medal by intertwining astrology with the Bible verse circumscribing the image. By iconographically penetrating the inscription in a manner heretofore unseen in numismatic media, the artist developed a means of visually aligning Scripture with the celestial realm. While the stars highlighted the astrological message, the form of the lettering held meaning that called attention to the biblical nature of the inscription, thereby emphasizing Julius's close connection to the divine. The epigraphy was borrowed from medieval and Renaissance manuscripts and carried Christian rather than classical connotations.<sup>88</sup> The

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<sup>85</sup> Hill, cats. 292 and 294. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 154-56. A medal of Isotta degli Atti of Rimini by Matteo de' Pasti has stops on the obverse of a medal that could be stars but appear to be flowers rather than stars. Like the Costanzo Sforza stops they are decorative and do not explicitly relate to the subject of the medal. Hill, cat. 167. Pollard, Luciano, and Pollard, 49.

<sup>86</sup> Pesaro is less than fifty kilometers from Urbino, so it would not have been impossible for Gian Cristoforo Romano to have viewed the medals at some point during his travels.

<sup>87</sup> I discussed the issue of stars as stops in ancient coinage with Richard Witschonke, director of the American Numismatic Society Summer Graduate Seminar, who stated that he had never seen this motif on any ancient coins.

<sup>88</sup> Aileen June Wang, "Michelangelo's Signature," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, no. 2 (2004): 454-58. Dario Covi, "Lettering in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting," *Art Bulletin*, 45 (1963): 6-7.

letter “O” nested within the “C,” for example, was never used on ancient coinage, nor on any prior portrait medal, but a similar layout of text can be found in religious artworks. A quotation from the Gospel of Luke at the bottom of a mid-Quattrocento altarpiece by Fra Carnevale, for example, used the same lettering (figs. 128-29).<sup>89</sup>

Both the form and content of the medallic inscription operated in conjunction with the image in order to produce meaning. As previously discussed, the literary and the visual involved two different systems for encoding information.<sup>90</sup> In the Scorpion medal the artist exploited iconographic elements of the literary in order to evoke the biblical source.<sup>91</sup> The unclassicizing-style and religious connotations of the lettering would have made the inscription quite conspicuous in the *all’antica* genre of portrait medals. Furthermore, by using stars in the border, Gian Cristoforo made a symbol (in the Peircean sense) functionally equivalent to a stop, which was essentially a type of punctuation.<sup>92</sup> He was not equating two different systems, but insinuating one into the other. Gian Cristoforo Romano forced the viewer to apply the rules for interpreting iconography to the medal’s literary content, and in doing so he expanded the role of each sign system.

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<sup>89</sup> Entry on the National Gallery of Art Washington website: <http://www.nga.gov/collection/gallery/gg4/gg4-359.html>. The inscription reads, *ecce ancilla Domini fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.” According to Witschonke, SED, CO, and TA treatments in the medallic inscription do not appear in ancient Roman coinage. It was not a coincidence that Gian Cristoforo Romano matched Christian lettering with Christian content in the Scorpion medal’s reverse inscription. The use of Christianizing ligatures indicates an awareness of the meanings carried by the forms of the letters.

<sup>90</sup> Barthes touched on the interaction of text and image in his discussion of press photographs and their captions. He asserted that text would never “duplicate” the image, but he said it could make meaning in the image more explicit or even retroactively project meaning into an image. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 26-27.

<sup>91</sup> Nagel and Wood refer to this as “noninformational aspects of the text.” I argue that the form of the lettering is a type of information or data in and of itself, but it is a different type than the information communicated by the meaning of a word. Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic*, 233.

<sup>92</sup> In Peirce’s tripartite system a symbol’s meaning is conventional or agreed upon by a culture. A star is arguably an icon, since it somewhat resembles a celestial body in an abstracted way. Charles Peirce, “Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs,” in *Semiotics: An introductory anthology*, ed. Robert Innis (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1986), 16-19.

### Camelio's Medal: Synergy of Word and Image

Camelio's medal offers yet another type of interaction between word and image (fig. 44). The reverse showed the pope kneeling before an enthroned Christ while St. Peter handed his keys to the pontiff. The vignette-like scene was encircled by the phrase, PASCITE QVI IN VOBIS EST GREGEM DEI, "Feed the flock of God which is Among You."<sup>93</sup> The text is from the 1 Peter 5:2.<sup>94</sup> In the context of the verse as it exists in the Bible, Peter is not speaking, but instead writing, and he is not addressing the pope, as he theoretically is the pope. The illustration on the medal can be interpreted as a mystical image of Julius receiving a directive from Christ through Peter.

Unlike some of Julius's commissions, such as the Conversion of St. Paul medal (fig. 65), in which the source of both text and image was the New Testament, here the text was biblical while Camelio was the source of the image.<sup>95</sup> In other words, the scene on Camelio's medal (the signifier) differed from the visual image (the signified) that the source text was supposed to evoke.<sup>96</sup> The image transformed the perception of the linguistic message from a written statement proffered in a letter to a line of dialogue spoken during a sort of *sacra conversazione*.

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<sup>93</sup> *Pascite*, which is the plural imperative, is used to address the audience in the inscription. Hill, cat. 445. Stahl, 139.

<sup>94</sup> The inscription is a portion of 1 Peter 5:2. The full passage reads as follows: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking care of it, not by constraint but willingly, according to God: not for filthy lucre's sake but voluntarily," *Pascite qui in vobis est gregem Dei, providentes non coacte, sed spontanee secundum Deum; neque turpis lucri gratia, sed voluntarie.*

<sup>95</sup> Hill, cats. 866-67.

<sup>96</sup> Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw Hill, 1966), 65-70. Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk, *Art History: A Critical Introduction to its Methods* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2006), 202.

The inscription, however, functioned to alter the viewer's reading of the scene from a static and potentially iconic image, into a narrative.

The two sign systems on the medal's reverse were not redundant because they did not convey the same information. Text and image appear to play off one another so as to mutually construct meaning in the medal. Using Barthes's terminology, this was not an example of text "anchoring" meaning in an image, rather it was an example of "relay." Each type of sign altered the manner in which the other was read, and consequently "the unity of the message is realized at a higher level."<sup>97</sup> The result in Camelio's medal was a message that increased the perceived prestige of the papacy.

The inscription and the picture both assert papal power, but the image did so in a more direct and potent fashion. It created a convincing fiction of the pope in close proximity to Christ and St. Peter in a scene that evoked temporal dominion. The image turned a simple statement about the role of Christians into a dramatization of the investiture of political and spiritual power. The scene did not vaguely posit a connection among pope, saint, and Christ; rather it clearly illustrated the connection.

The picture was more explicit than any inscription short enough to fit on a medal could have been. The sheer volume of data was impressive, as was the specificity of the information in the scene.<sup>98</sup> The reverse visually proclaimed that the pontiff, with his tiara beside him, was in the presence of Christ and St. Peter. Furthermore, St. Peter handed Julius keys while Jesus oversaw the transfer of power from his kingly throne. The rhetorical force of mimesis

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<sup>97</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 38-41.

<sup>98</sup> Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic*, 253-54.

exemplified the effectiveness of showing something rather than saying it.<sup>99</sup> Instead of stating, “the pope is close to Christ,” the image allowed the viewer to draw the conclusion for himself, which presumably would have had a greater cognitive impact since it appeared self-evident rather than dictated by the medal.<sup>100</sup>

The text was then oriented in relation to the image so that the Bible appeared to support the assertions in the scene, thereby ostensibly giving the image backing from the trusted authority of Scripture. Text and image worked together to alter and amplify the effect of the opposing sign system.<sup>101</sup> After undertaking both discursive and figural readings of the reverse, the viewer could then apply his perception of Julius to the more detailed portrait on the opposite side of the medal.<sup>102</sup>

### **Metadata: A Different Type of Textual Information**

To conclude, not all wording on a medal was equal, nor was every phrase meant to function in the same manner. Some text was included in order to make claims about the object itself. Dates, for example, were incorporated into a portion of Julius’s medals, and they helped narrate the story of the work of art.<sup>103</sup> It is unclear why dates were featured on some medals and not on others, but when used they did more than simply denote or connote aspects of the

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<sup>99</sup> For a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of mimesis in relation to text, see Barkan, *Michelangelo*, 82-85. The persuasive power of image over text is related to Leonardo’s discussion of the primacy of vision over other senses. Leonardo, 7.

<sup>100</sup> This relates to Bryson’s idea that perspective, like mimesis, is not inherently true, but it is a persuasive or convincing way to organize visual data. Bryson, *Word and Image*, 20.

<sup>101</sup> Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, 26.

<sup>102</sup> Bryson, *Word and Image*, 1-7.

<sup>103</sup> Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic*, 282.

images.<sup>104</sup> A date helped to dictate how the viewer was supposed to interpret the object as a whole. It was self-referencing and was intended to frame the medal in time and place by making a claim about its own origins. Nagel and Wood refer to this type of inscription as “metadata.” The date did not label the image but instead commented on its circumstances. It allowed the artwork to testify on its own behalf by essentially declaring, “Julius commissioned this in 1506,” or “this medal was created in 1506.”<sup>105</sup>

By including the year in the inscription the artist incorporated an indexical quality into the work. The date was perceived as tangible evidence of the object’s creation at a particular moment, not unlike a digital timestamp on a photo or document today.<sup>106</sup> I propose that in the context of a medal, a date could add credibility to less believable or otherwise outlandish claims. The inclusion of verifiable information lulled the viewer into believing many of the unverifiable connotations elsewhere in the work of art.<sup>107</sup>

Similarly, the CENTVM CELLE medal can be interpreted as including metadata since the reverse inscription appears to make a claim about its own origins (fig. 55).<sup>108</sup> As previously discussed, copies of the medal that were deposited in the foundations of the fortress may have been intended to be perceived as antiquities because of the inclusion of the ancient name of the town. The phrase, CENTVM CELLE, denoted and connoted various aspects of the image, but it also served a self-referencing, faux-indexical role in relation to the object. In other words, it was

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<sup>104</sup> The medal by Camelio included a date as did all of the Caradosso and the Loreto medals. Hill, cats. 445, 659-61, and 868-69.

<sup>105</sup> Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic*, 233, 282.

<sup>106</sup> Winfried Nöth, *Handbook of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 416-17.

<sup>107</sup> Artists’ signatures can be interpreted in a similar fashion as dates, but only one of Julius’s medals as a cardinal and one as pope included the signature of the artist. Hill, cats. 395 and 445.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, cat. 872.



meant to be read as an index, even though it did not have indexical qualities. It appears to make a claim to antique status on behalf of the work of art. Not coincidentally, it was one of Julius's medals that lacked a date, therefore the CENTVM CELLE inscription could have been used to fix the artwork in another time and place in lieu of a more specific date.

The dated medals and the CENTVM CELLE medal indicate that inscriptions could include information that did more than refer to the images. Text could instead make ambitious claims about the status of the objects and the circumstances surrounding their creation. Whether or not these claims were true was beside the point.

## **Conclusion**

The use of pictorial and linguistic content in portrait medals was anything but consistent. Anchoring, labeling, relaying, and transference of messages all occurred in Julius's medallic corpus. The variety of interactions between the two sign systems demanded that viewers have complex interpretive skills, as images could dictate the meaning of text, and text could alter the meaning of images.

The array of text-image relationships was enabled by the lack of standard practices within the genre. A radical patron with highly skilled artists at his disposal, Julius further expanded the boundaries of portrait medals. While his commissions typically featured forthright proclamations of spiritual and secular power, they also expressed more subtle ideas of erudition and sophistication through the shrewd deployment of classical and biblical content. The fact that his medals included numerous numismatic innovations indicated that Julius was a patron with avant-garde tastes. Although the pontiff is most famous for his grandiose endeavors, the medals

reveal that even his smallest commissions broke new ground and helped shape High Renaissance art.

## CONCLUSION

Taking a broad view of Pope Julius II's medallic corpus makes a few points clear. A lack of consistency is apparent in the medals, which was perhaps inevitable considering the range of circumstances that prompted the commissions. This is not a criticism of the medals, as they were never intended to function as a cohesive unit. On the contrary, it speaks to the versatility of the format. The fact that Julius continued to rely on the medium from his cardinalate until the end of his pontificate indicates his faith in the ability of medals to successfully craft his persona and perpetuate his ideology.

Several medalists worked for the pope, which may have contributed to the uneven nature of the corpus. Caradosso cast only three medals for Julius, yet they are undoubtedly the most famous. This is understandable considering his truly magnificent image of St. Peter's Basilica (figs. 1 and 40).<sup>1</sup> The rendering of an impossibly monumental church evoked Rome's imperial heritage in an almost dream-like fashion, and it functioned as a visual manifestation of the pontiff's grandest ambitions.

Gian Cristoforo Romano's medals were arguably the most inventive in the corpus. Using ingenious combinations of words and images, they surpassed the productions of his peers. The artist elevated the genre from a mere tool for propaganda to a refined and cerebral art form appropriate for a courtly setting. The CENTVM CELLE medal equated Julius with ancient emperors through a subtle literary reference (fig. 55).<sup>2</sup> The struck medal of Peace was even more

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<sup>1</sup>George Francis Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini, Volume 1* (London: British Museum, 1930, reprinted, Florence: SPES, 1984), cats. 659-60. Graham Pollard, Eleonora Luciano, and Maria Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: Volume One, Italy, The Collection of the National Gallery of Art, Systematic Catalogue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 234-35, cats. 219-20.

<sup>2</sup> The reverse inscription reads CENTVM CELLE, meaning "Place of a Hundred Rooms." This was the ancient name of Civitavecchia and it was recorded in the *Epistulae* of Pliny. Pliny the Younger, *C. Plinii Caecilii Secundi Epistulae ad Traianum imperatorem cum eiusdem responsis*, 6.31. Hill, cat. 872. Roberto Weiss, "The Medals of

impressive. It seamlessly fused a biblical passage with an image from a second-century AD imperial coin in the form of a word game (figs. 49 and 80).<sup>3</sup> It is no wonder that Castiglione included the artist in his fictional gathering of cultural elites.<sup>4</sup>

Serbaldi created more medals for the pope than any other artist, and his images and inscriptions were almost always straightforward.<sup>5</sup> The text usually consisted of one or two words and the iconography was simple and legible. His TVTELA medals cast the pope as a protector and a pastoral figure (figs. 61-62), while the Palace of Justice medals advertised Julius's plans to rebuild Rome (figs. 58-60).<sup>6</sup> The simplicity enhanced the efficacy, and it presumably made the medals easy to decipher and successful in communicating ideas.

Despite these artists' varied approaches to the medium, Julius's medals were always used in support of two common goals: proclamation of the Church's sovereignty and glorification of the papacy. This was accomplished by relying on a few broad themes. Implied connections to imperial Rome, a privileged relationship with the divine, and a unique disposition towards the classical world were invoked with the greatest frequency.

What the pope lacked in resources, be they material, financial, or martial, he more than made up for in symbolic power. The medals seized upon the pontiff's singular combination of religious and temporal authority that his rivals lacked. Julius cast himself as the successor to St. Peter and as the rightful heir to Rome's historical and cultural patrimony. Numerous princes compared themselves to ancient emperors, but Julius had the distinct advantage of ruling from

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Pope Julius II (1503-1513)," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 175.

<sup>3</sup> Hill, cats. 877. For a discussion of *Aequitas* figures on imperial Roman coins see note 47 in Chapter 2.

<sup>4</sup>Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier: The Singleton Translation*, ed. Daniel Javitch (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002), 12-15, I.4-8.

<sup>5</sup> All of Serbaldi's medals were struck rather than cast. Hill, cats. 224-29, 866-70.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, cats. 225-29.

the Eternal City. He possessed the treasures and terrain of antiquity, and his symbolic gestures took on an unparalleled level of legitimacy. Appealing to the papacy's double-lineage, Julius was able to out-manuever his adversaries while providing a useful political blueprint for his successors.

## APPENDIX Two Artists, One Medal

An issue scholars have neglected to investigate is the possibility that one artist could have designed the obverse of a medal, while a different artist designed the reverse, as I argue is the case with fig. 57. Both Hill and Weiss avoided the topic of artistic collaboration, and some of their attributions seem to have been determined in part by their standard of one artist per medal. It seems completely reasonable for two artists to have worked on a single medal, especially in the case of Serbaldi and Gian Cristoforo Romano. Both men were employed by the same patron for several years and both worked on similar projects.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, concepts of intellectual property that govern artistic productions today were not valid in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, nor was the idea of a work of art representing a single artistic vision privileged in this period.

Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson pointed out that works of art were not necessarily unified entities. Traditionally scholars have attempted to interpret art objects so as to account for every detail as part of a unified vision. Details that did not fit into this account are ignored or regarded as mistakes. While Bal and Bryson attribute these glitches as inherent to the “hetero-discursive nature” of the process of art production, in the case of Julius’s medals, I propose that the lack of unity may have been the product of multiple artists having a hand in a single work of art.<sup>2</sup> If one is able to disregard modern standards of authorship, standards by which Renaissance artists did

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<sup>1</sup> This issue is further complicated by the fact that mules, or obverses arbitrarily combined with reverses, were sometimes struck using the original dies more than a century after the dies were engraved. John L. Varriano, “Some Documentary Evidence on the Restriking of Early Papal Medals,” *The American Numismatic Society: Museum Notes* 26, (1981): 216-19.

<sup>2</sup> Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, “Semiotics and Art History,” *Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (1991): 203.

not abide, it is completely understandable that an obverse by Serbaldi could have been combined with a reverse by Gian Cristoforo Romano (fig. 57).<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, practical concerns played a role in the production of medals. It is impossible to deny that artists had some agency, but expression of their personal styles or inner-voices were not the driving forces behind the creation of these objects. The artists were instead working at the pleasure of the pope. They occasionally reused dies from previous medals in order to fulfill commissions for someone well above their station.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the artists were not paid to engrave new dies, or the patron could have been fond of the portrait from an earlier medal and requested that it be used for a later medal.

One must also consider that art forms involving mechanical reproduction were relatively new in this period.<sup>5</sup> The artists were working only decades after the first printing press arrived in Rome, and they may have been experimenting with the possibilities of a reproducible genre.<sup>6</sup> Julius was the first pope to commission medals that were struck rather than cast, and significant technological strides were made in the first decade of the Cinquecento involving the screw press

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<sup>3</sup> Some conceptions of authorship existed in the early sixteenth century, but they primarily applied to prints and books. Albrecht Dürer famously included a colophon on some of his prints that warned others not to copy his work, yet this did not stop Marcantonio Raimondi from copying his designs. Conventions and protocol were clearly still developing in the Cinquecento. Lisa Pon, "Prints and Privileges: Regulating the Image in 16<sup>th</sup> Century Italy," *Harvard University Art Museums Bulletin* 6, no. 2 (1998): 41-43.

<sup>4</sup> The recycling of portraits was fairly common in Julius's medallic patronage, as several medals in his corpus share the same portrait. This is particularly true in the case of Gian Cristoforo Romano and Serbaldi's productions. The following medals include portraits that were reused on other medals in Julius's corpus: George Francis Hill, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini, Volume 1* (London: British Museum, 1930, reprinted, Florence: SPES, 1984), cats. 224, 226, 227, 228, 660, 661, 866, 868, 869, 870, 872, 877.

<sup>5</sup> The topic of the production of multiples and the process of embracing new technologies in the Renaissance is a fruitful one. For a look at some of the underlying theories see Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Marxism and Art: Writings in Aesthetics and Criticism* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1978), 281-300.

<sup>6</sup> John D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 14. For an interesting discussion of the impact of prints on the proliferation of artistic ideas see Bernadine Ann Barnes, *Michelangelo in Print: Reproductions as Response in the Sixteenth-century* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 29-35.

and the striking of coins and medals. The horizons of this process were expanding and artists and patrons were still experimenting with the possibilities.

Although the invention of the screw press is often associated with Benvenuto Cellini, technology for striking medals and large coins was being developed in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and was closely connected with the patronage of Pope Julius II. According to Giorgio Vasari, Donato Bramante built a screw press while employed by Julius. Bramante's device was probably used for attaching papal seals to documents rather than striking coins or medals, but its influence upon numismatics is quite feasible.<sup>7</sup>

The lack of signatures may have been one factor that allowed the medalists the freedom to use the designs of other artists. In the mid-Quattrocento Matteo de'Pasti signed many of his medals, but some specimens lacking signatures have been discovered. Pollard suggested that the unsigned works were of lower quality and therefore the artist's name was removed so as not to diminish his reputation.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps a similar principle was at play with the borrowing of images from fellow artists in the Roman school. Since these medals lacked signatures, it may have been acceptable to use them in the context of a new medal without falsely representing the original artist.

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<sup>7</sup> Leonardo da Vinci and Bramante were associates while the two were in Milan in the late fifteenth century, and designs for a press intended to cut coin blanks have been found in one of Leonardo's notebooks from 1510-14. Philip Attwood, "Cellini's Coins and Medals" in *Benvenuto Cellini: Sculptor, Goldsmith, Writer*, eds. Margaret Gallucci and Paolo Rossi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 97-120. Nicholas Adams, "New Information about the Screw Press as a Device for Minting Coins: Bramante Cellini and Baldassare Peruzzi," *The American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 23, (1978): 201-02. Adams quotes Vasari as follows: *Per il che meritò dal detto papa, che sommamente lo amava per le sue qualità, di essere fatto degno dell' ufficio del Piombo, nel quale fece uno edificio da improntar le bolle con una vite molto bella.* Vasari, *Lives*, Vol. IV, trans. Gaston du Vere, 143. Stahl, 139-41. Paul Goldman, "A Survey of Mechanical Minting Methods in Europe Prior to the Introduction of the Mill and Screw Press into English Coining Circa 1561," *The Numismatic Circular* 83, no. 6 (1975): 234-235. Roberto Weiss, "The Medals of Pope Julius II (1503-1513)," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965): 169. Stephen Scher, "An Introduction to the Renaissance Portrait Medal," in *Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal*, ed. Stephen Scher, (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), 1-2.

<sup>8</sup> Graham Pollard, Eleonora Luciano, and Maria Pollard, *Renaissance Medals: Volume One, Italy, The Collection of the National Gallery of Art, Systematic Catalogue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), XVII.



Much is still to be determined about artists working together on a single medal, but it is well known that medalists in the Renaissance borrowed freely from one another, as was the case with Gian Cristoforo Romano's medal of St. Peter's (fig. 56), which took an image directly from one of Caradosso's medals (fig. 1). The images of the fortress at Civitavecchia, one by Serbaldi (fig. 51) and the other by Gian Cristoforo (fig. 55), are nearly identical as well. In the Quattrocento Andrea Guacialoti twice used designs from the work of Cristoforo di Geremia (figs. 70-71) for the medals of Pope Sixtus IV (figs. 72-73).<sup>9</sup> Sperandio of Mantua took multiple motifs from Pisanello's medals, including virtually an entire reverse (fig. 74) that he employed on a medal for Carlo Grati (fig. 75).<sup>10</sup>

Hill's comments reveal that he imposed his anachronistic values on Renaissance works of art. He could only conceive of borrowing or copying in negative terms. Referring to Sperandio's Grati reverse as a "travesty," Hill said the artist's general dependence on the work of Pisanello was "due to laziness."<sup>11</sup> In the pre-industrial age borrowing must have been viewed differently than in the twentieth century. Scholars were unable to conceive of the direct use of a die by a second artist. These numismatists, as insightful and prolific as they were, could only imagine the artist-as-genius or near-genius, and they could not envision the artist-as-worker.<sup>12</sup> Thus, Hill explicitly, and Weiss implicitly, disapproved of the practice of copying or borrowing ideas.

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<sup>9</sup> Guacialoti copied the figures from Cristoforo's almost exactly, but in both cases he adjusted the inscriptions. Hill, cats. 751, 753, 755, and 758.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., cats. 35 and 392.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 91 and cat. 392.

<sup>12</sup> Their scholarly outlooks may have been shaped by a Varsarian conception of the artist. This concept was not yet fully formed or operative in the Quattrocento and early Cinquecento. For more on Vasari's ideology see Andrew Ladis, ed., *Reading Vasari* (Athens, Georgia: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2005), passim.

I do not wish to strip the medalists of all agency and creativity, as both Serbaldi and Gian Cristoforo produced many beautiful and inventive designs. Rather, I am positing that the practical and functional aspects of their profession may have demanded the reuse of dies. Moreover, based on their continued employment by Julius, such practices appear to have been fully accepted by Renaissance audiences.

Figure 1: Caradosso Foppa, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: St. Peter's Basilica), 1506, cast bronze, 57 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 2: Pisanello, *Emperor John VIII Palaeologus*, 1438-1439, cast bronze, 102 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 3: Roman Sesterius, AD 74, bronze, 32 mm diameter, 26.16 g, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 4: Andrea Guacialoti, *Pope Nicholas V*, 1455, cast bronze, 78 mm diameter, Vatican Medagliere.

Figure 5: Hegesandros, Athenodoros, and Polydoros of Rhodes, *The Laocoön*, c. First century BC, rediscovered on Esquiline Hill in 1506, Vatican Museums.

Figure 6: Pinturicchio, *Music*, Borgia Apartments, 1492-94, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 7: Raphael, *Stanza della Segnatura* (view of *School of Athens* and *Poetry*), 1508-11, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 8: Raphael, *Stanza della Segnatura* (view of *Disputa* and *Law*), 1508-11, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 9: Raphael, *Theology (Disputa)*, 1508-11, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 10: Raphael, *Philosophy (School of Athens)*, 1508-11, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 11: Raphael, *Law (Justice)*, 1508-11, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 12: Raphael, *Poetry (Parnassus)*, 1508-11, fresco, Vatican Palace.



Figure 13: Raphael, *Stanza di Eliodoro* (view of *The Expulsion of Heliodorus* and *The Mass of Bolsena*), 1512-14, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 14: Raphael, *Stanza di Eliodoro* (view of *The Repulse of Attila* and *The Liberation of St. Peter*), 1512-14, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 15: Raphael, *The Liberation of St. Peter*, 1512-14, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 16: Raphael, *The Expulsion of Heliodorus*, 1512-14, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 17: Raphael, *The Mass of Bolsena*, 1512-14, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 18: Hartt's Reconstruction of 1505 design of Michelangelo's *Tomb of Pope Julius II*.

Figure 19: Michelangelo, *Sistine Chapel Ceiling*, 1508-1512, fresco, Vatican.

Fig. 20: Sandro Botticelli and assistants, *Gallery of Popes* (detail), 1482-83, fresco, Vatican (Sistine Chapel).

Figure 21: Diagram of Sistine Chapel ceiling showing locations of figures.

Figure 22: Michelangelo, *Ignudo*, 1508-1512, fresco, Vatican (Sistine Chapel).

Figure 23: Della Rovere Stemma, stucco, 1511, Stanza della Segnatura.

Figure 24: Giovanni Antonio Dosio, *View of the Cortile del Belvedere from the Vatican Palace*, pen and brown ink with traces of black chalk on paper, 1558-61, Uffizi 2559A, Florence.

Figure 25: Donato Bramante, St. Peter's Basilica (floor plan), c. 1506, Vatican.

Figure 26: Apollonius of Athens, *Belvedere Torso*, First century BC, Vatican Museums.

Figure 27: Pantheon (cross section), 123-125 AD, Rome.

Figure 28: Unknown artist from Roman school, *Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere* (reverse: Fortress of Ostia), February-November 1483, cast bronze, 34 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.



Figure 29: Unknown artist from Roman School, *Pope Sixtus IV* (reverse: Fortress of Ostia), February-November 1483, cast bronze, 39 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 30: Sperandio of Mantua, *Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere* (reverse: ship with allegorical figures), c. 1488, cast bronze, 76 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 31: Giovanni Candida, *Cardinal Giuliano Della Rovere* (reverse: Clemente Della Rovere), March 1495, cast bronze, 62 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 32: Unknown artist from Roman School, *Cardinal Pietro Barbo*, c. 1455, cast bronze, 34 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 33: Unknown artist from Roman School, *Cardinal Pietro Barbo*, c. 1455, cast bronze, 34 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 34: Adriano Fiorentino (attributed), *Cardinal Raffaele Riario*, c. 1483, cast bronze, 80 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 35: Lysippus the Younger (attributed), *Cardinal Raffaele Riario*, 1478, cast bronze, 34 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 36: Unknown artist from Ferrarese School, *Cardinal Bartolommeo Roverella*, c. 1470, cast bronze, 67 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 37: Unknown artist from Ferrarese School, *Cardinal Bartolommeo Roverella*, c. 1470, cast bronze, 44 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 38: Unknown artist from Roman school, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Cortile del Belvedere), c. 1504, cast bronze, 45 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 39: Portrait of Pope Julius II in illuminated manuscript, Vatican, MS. Vat. lat. 1682, fol. gr (Weiss, 33, cat. e).

Figure 40: Caradosso Foppa, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: St. Peter's Basilica), 1506, cast bronze, 57 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 41: Donato Bramante, *Plan for St. Peter's Basilica*, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi (U 1A), Florence.

Figure 42: Donato Bramante (attributed), *Plan for St. Peter's Basilica*, 1505, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi (U 8Av), Florence.

Figure 43: Caradosso Foppa, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: shepherd), 1506, cast bronze, 57 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 44: Camelio, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Christ, St. Peter, and kneeling pontiff), 1506, struck bronze, 33 mm diameter, British Museum, London.



Figure 45: Francesco Francia (attributed), *Pope Julius II* (reverse: enthroned pontiff), November 1506, struck bronze, 35 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 46: Francesco Francia, Bolognese Giulio (coin), c. 1506, silver, 29 mm diameter, 4.42 g, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 47: Unknown artist from Roman School, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Della Rovere stemma), March 1507, struck bronze, 28 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 48: Gian Cristoforo Romano, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Peace and Fortune), November 1506-March 1507, cast bronze, 43 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 49: Gian Cristoforo Romano, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Peace and Aequitas), 1505-12, struck silver, 36 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 50: Unknown artist, re-striking or later fabrication of *Pope Julius II*, possibly nineteenth century, struck bronze, 35 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 51: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Fortress of Civitavecchia), 1508, struck bronze, 30 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 52: Pier Maria Serbaldi, Triple Papal Ducat, c. 1508, gold, 29 mm diameter, Vatican Medagliere.

Figure 53: Pier Maria Serbaldi, Doppio fiorino di camera, c. 1508, gold, 28 mm diameter, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome.

Figure 54: Pier Maria Serbaldi, Doppio Giulio, c. 1508, silver, 28 mm diameter, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 55: Gian Cristoforo Romano, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Fortress of Civitavecchia), 1508, struck bronze, 38 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 56: Gian Cristoforo Romano, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: St. Peter's Basilica), c. 1508-09, struck bronze, 36 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 57: Pier Maria Serbaldi (obverse), Gian Cristoforo Romano (reverse), *Pope Julius II* (reverse: St. Peter's Basilica), c. 1508-09, struck bronze, 36 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 58: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Palace of Justice), 1508, struck bronze, 30 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 59: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Palace of Justice), 1508, struck bronze, 30 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence

Figure 60: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Palace of Justice), 1508, struck bronze, 29 mm diameter, British Museum, London.



Figure 61: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: shepherd), 1508-13, struck bronze, 30 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 62: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: shepherd), 1508-13, struck gold, 30 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 63: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Basilica of Loreto), 1509, struck bronze, 36 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 64: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Basilica of Loreto), possibly nineteenth-century, struck bronze, 38 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 65: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Conversion of St. Paul), 1509-July 1512, struck bronze, 40 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 66: Pier Maria Serbaldi, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: Conversion of St. Paul), Summer 1510-March 1512, struck bronze, 40mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 67: Raphael, *The Expulsion of Heliodorus* (detail), 1512-14, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 68: Raphael, *Pope Julius II*, 1511-12, oil on panel, National Gallery, London.

Figure 69: Gian Cristoforo Romano, *Pope Julius II* (reverse: scorpion), 1511, struck bronze, 26 mm diameter, Vatican Medagliere.

Figure 70: Cristoforo di Geremia, *Constantine the Great* (reverse), c. 1468, cast bronze, 73 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 71: Cristoforo di Geremia, *Paolo Dotti* (reverse), c. 1470, cast bronze, 62 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 72: Andrea Guacialoti, *Pope Sixtus IV*, 1481, cast bronze, 60 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 73: Andrea Guacialoti, *Pope Sixtus IV*, c. 1475-84, cast bronze, 74 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 74: Pisanello, *Domenico Malatesta* (reverse), c. 1445, cast bronze, 85 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 75: Sperandio of Mantua, *Carlo Grati* (reverse), c. 1485, cast bronze, 104 mm diameter, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.

Figure 76: The Papal States in the Renaissance (Kaborycha, 195, map 10.2).



Figure 77: Pisanello, *Sigismondo Malatesta*, 1445, cast bronze, 105 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 78: Sperandio of Mantua, *Federico da Montefeltro*, c. 1474, cast bronze, 89 mm diameter, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Figure 79: Anonymous Woodcut from *Julius Exclusus*, c. 1522-23, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, (Chambers 2, fig. 1).

Figure 80: Roman Denarius, AD 167-68, silver, 18.5 mm diameter, 3.39 g, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 81: Niccolò Fiorentino (attributed), *Pope Innocent VIII*, c. 1480-86, cast bronze, 85 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 82: Unknown artist from Roman School, *Pope Alexander VI*, 1495, cast bronze, 55 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 83: Unknown artist, *Christ the Good Shepherd*, Third century AD, fresco, Catacombs of St. Priscilla, Rome.

Figure 84: *Column of Trajan* (detail), dedicated 113 AD, Rome.

Figure 85: Melozzo da Forlì, *Sixtus IV Founding the Vatican Library*, c. 1477, fresco, Vatican Museums.

Figure 86: Titian, *Pope Paul III and Grandsons*, 1545-46, oil on canvas, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.

Figure 87: Raphael, *Leo X with Two Cardinals*, c. 1517-18, oil on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Figure 88: Papal Ducat of Bologna, c. 1506, gold, 23 mm diameter, 3.44 g, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 89: Doppio Bolognino, c. 1506, silver, 20 mm diameter, 1.3 g, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 90: Pisanello, *Alfonso V of Aragon*, 1449, cast bronze, 110 mm diameter, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Figure 91: Michelangelo, *Pope Julius II* (detail of *Tomb of Pope Julius II*), completed 1545, San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome.

Figure 92: Lysippus the Younger, *Pope Sixtus IV*, c. 1471, cast bronze, 42 mm diameter, British Museum, London.



Figure 93: Papal Ducat, 1471-84, gold, 22 mm diameter, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome.

Figure 94: Cristoforo di Geremia, *Pope Paul II*, 1469, cast bronze, 39 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 95: Matteo de' Pasti, *Leon Battista Alberti*, c. 1454, cast bronze, 92 mm diameter, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Figure 96: Gian Cristoforo Romano, *Isabella d'Este*, 1498, cast bronze, 39 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 97: Painted cupola over altar in Old Sacristy, mid-1400s, fresco, San Lorenzo, Florence.

Figure 98: Raphael, *Astronomy with the Celestial Globe*, 1508-1511, fresco, Ceiling of Stanza Della Segnatura, Vatican Palace.

Figure 99: Raphael, *God the Father at the Center of the Celestial Wheel*, 1512-16, oil on panel with gilded wood, Chigi Chapel, Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome.

Figure 100: Reconstruction of Temple of Fortuna at Palestrina, temple built c. 100 BC.

Figure 101: Giuliano da Sangallo, *Plan for St. Peter's Basilica*, 1505, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi (U 8Ar), Florence.

Figure 102: Matteo de' Pasti, *Sigismondo Malatesta*, c. 1450, cast bronze, 40 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 103: Denier of Charlemagne, first half of ninth century, 20 mm diameter, 1.6 grams, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Figure 104: Pot of medals deposited in wall of the Palazzo Venezia, c. 1465, Rome.

Figure 105: Projected remodeling of Harbor and Fortress at Civitavecchia, c. 1508 (Bruschi, 123, fig. 131).

Figure 106: Diagram showing network of Pope Julius II's building projects in Rome.

Figure 107: Remains of the Palace of Justice on the Via Giulia, Rome.

Figure 108: Unknown artist from Roman school, *Pope Paul II*, 1465, cast bronze, 33 mm diameter, British Museum, London.



Figure 109: Andrea Mantegna, *Camera degli Sposi* (detail), 1466-74, fresco, Palazzo Ducale, Mantua.

Figure 110: Matteo de' Pasti, *Sigismondo Malatesta*, 1446, cast bronze, 83 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 111: Baccio Pontelli, Palazzo della Cancelleria, c. 1485, Rome.

Figure 112: Sistine Chapel (exterior), 1477-80, view from the Vatican Palace.

Figure 113: Matteo de'Pasti, *Guarino da Verona*, c. 1450-52, cast bronze, 95 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 114: Amadio da Milano (attributed), *Niccolò d'Este III*, c. 1440, cast bronze, 52 mm diameter, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Figure 115: Pietro da Milano, *Frederick II of Lorraine*, c. 1462, cast bronze, 80 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 116: Petrecino of Florence, *Pico Della Mirandola (Gianfrancesco)*, 1460, cast bronze, 53 mm diameter, British Museum, London.

Figure 117: Pisanello, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 1446, cast bronze, 67 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 118: Roman Denarius, 206-200 BC, silver, 20.5 mm diameter, 4.14 g, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 119: Roman Quadrans, AD 41-54, bronze, 17 mm diameter, 2.67 g, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 120: Raphael, *Disputa* (detail), 1508-11, fresco, Vatican Palace.

Figure 121: Piero della Francesca, *Federico da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza*, 1465-72, tempera on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Figure 122: Justus of Ghent, *Pope Sixtus IV*, c. 1473-75, oil on panel, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Figure 123: Antonello da Messina, *Condottiere*, 1475, oil on panel, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Figure 124: Pablo Picasso, *Compote Dish with Fruit, Violin, and Glass*, 1913, charcoal, chalk, watercolor, oil paint, and coarse charcoal or pigment in binding medium on applied papers, mounted on cardboard, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.



Figure 125: Roman Denarius, 19 BC, silver, 4.09 g, Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge.

Figure 126: Roman Denarius, 40 BC, silver, 3.76 g, American Numismatic Society, New York.

Figure 127: Gianfrancesco Enzola, *Costanzo Sforza*, 1475, lead alloy, 80 mm diameter, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 128: Fra Carnevale, *Annunciation*, c. 1445-1450, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Figure 129: Fra Carnevale, *Annunciation* (detail), c. 1445-1450, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

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