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MEDALS AND THE ROMAN PROJECTS OF POPE PAUL V
Lauren Jacobi

Camillo Borghese was elected to the papal throne on 16 May 1605, at the age of fifty-two. He took his papal name - Paul V - in honour of Paul III (1534-49), who had promoted his father after the Borghese family had moved from Siena to Rome. Medals, issued throughout his nineteen-year pontificate, were a means of deliberately fashioning his papal identity. While some of these medals have been considered individually, they have not in recent times been examined as a group.

The records of the papal mint and papal monetary accounts indicate that by the time of Paul’s pontificate it had become standard practice to issue medals regularly for certain designated rituals and special events. Medals were produced for annual devotions, such as the feast day of Sts Peter and Paul on 29 June, when the so-called annuale was distributed. Other devotional medals celebrated rituals such as Christ washing the apostles’ feet, a ceremony that was ritually re-enacted. Special events included such occurrences as architectural foundation ceremonies, the completion of projects, alterations to major buildings, military victories, important ambassadorial visits, and canonisations.

Compared with previous medals issued to celebrate papal coronations or possessi, the iconography of the medal that seems to have been issued to commemorate Paul’s assumption of the papal tiara is unusual (fig. 1). The medal, by Giorgio Rancetti, was struck, a technique that during the sixteenth century had come to be preferred over casting, as it was more economical and efficient for producing medals in quantity. After the Council of Trent most papal medals celebrating the possessi, such as those of popes Sixtus V, Gregory XIV and Innocent IX, carried an allegorical representation of the coronation act. The reverse of Paul’s medal carries instead a representation of the Holy Spirit as a dove, a device that the pope chose as his own, as he did the accompanying text, VBI VVLT SPIRAT (It blows where it wishes). The style of the portrait also seems to be without precedent within the body of medals made for possessi; unlike other post-Tridentine medals celebrating a new papacy, in which the pope is shown dressed in a formal cope with an elaborate mose, Paul is shown in simple garb.

Because of the time lapse between Paul’s coronation and his possessio, determining exactly when and why this medal was issued is complex and demonstrates how imprecise the medallic literature on papal medals can be. Paul’s coronation ceremony took place on 29 May 1605, but his possessio was celebrated some months later, on 6 November, that is, well after 29 June, when the year’s annuale would have been issued. A payment made to Rancetti shows that a medal was issued for the possessio: ‘1605 ... Adi 3 di settembre scudi 300 + 50 per le medaglie da farsi il giorno del possessio.’ But a separate record from the Depositeria Generale shows that Rancetti had already been paid for a medal within weeks of the feast day of Sts Peter and Paul: ‘1605 giugno 14 ... scudi 1000 d’oro et scudi 200 di moneta a Giorgio Rancetti a buon conto delle medaglie da farsi.’ The only medal known from the pope’s first year that can have fulfilled either of these functions is the medal with the dove reverse. Filippo Bonanni, whose publication of 1699 on papal medals has generally been regarded as the foundation for other books on the subject, does not specify when this medal was issued, but he selects it as the first medal of Paul’s pontificate and discusses it immediately after an account of Paul’s election, indicating perhaps that he thought it was distributed on the day of the possessio. However, in his recent ‘definitive’ study of annuali Franco Bartolotti claims that this medal was the annuale for Paul’s first regnal year. The answer may be that a possessio medal could also serve as an annuale.

The medal describes Paul as PAVLVS. V. PONT. M. A I (Pope Paul V, in his first year). Significantly, however, the inscriptions of many other medals identify him specifically as a Roman. While technically true, for he was born in Rome, Paul in this way aligned himself with his mother’s heritage, overlooking his father’s Sienese background. One of the temporary arches erected for his possessio was also inscribed thus, while the arch of
Septimius Severus was draped with a banner stressing both his Roman origin and his ‘imperial’ status:

*PONTIFICI MAXIMO ROMANO / OB ANTIQVAM VRBIS FELICITATEM OPTIMI PRINCIPIS IMPERIO...*

(To the Roman pope/Because of the ancient felicity of the city under the authority of an excellent prince...). He was also described as Roman in the inscriptions on many of his building projects, including the prominent frieze on the facade of the new Saint Peter’s.

Characterising him as Roman strengthened not only the association between the pope and Rome, the *caput mundi*, but also the connection between other Borghese family members and the city. At the time of Paul’s pontificate, papal nepotism was commonly practised, and Paul set about promoting Borghese interests. His brother, wife, and their son settled in the Palazzo Borghese beside the Tiber, as did his sister and her husband; Paul also immediately summoned to Rome their son, Scipione Caraffelli (1576-1633), who was studying law in Perugia. The small Borghese family presence in Rome was thereby increased, and Paul was assiduous in finding employment for its members: his brother, young nephew and in-laws held military positions, and Scipione Caffarelli, Paul’s favoured nephew, advanced in the Curia. Just three months after the pope’s election, Scipione was elevated to the position of cardinal and forsook his hereditary name (Caffarelli), adopting his maternal surname (Borghese). He quickly gained political, ecclesiastical and financial benefits (no cardinal has ever held so many posts), and his residences on the Quirinal became renowned, as his income grew rapidly: 108,102 scudi in 1609, it had reached 189,640 a year later.

Barring a few exceptions, such as the medal discussed above, the medals of Paul are concerned principally with building projects, which can be divided into distinct categories: St Peter’s and the Vatican, the Quirinal, S. Maria Maggiore, and the improvement of public utilities. The medals acted as propaganda for these specific works, but also aided an ongoing project: crafting an image of Paul’s pontificate that associated the Borghese with Rome, reinforced the connection between Paul and the Virgin, and created the impression of papal munificence and power.

Five Pauline medals are centred on the Vatican and St. Peter’s. Issued between 1608 and 1618, they celebrate work on the nave and façade of the basilica, the completion of the *confessio* over St. Peter’s tomb and the entrance into the *grotte*, and the embellishment of the old gateway leading into the Vatican palace. The practice of issuing medals concerning the basilica was well established. The Pauline medals of St. Peter’s aligned Paul V with this custom, reinforcing his papal authority through an evocation of the medallic tradition.

In contrast to his three immediate predecessors, who did little to alter the church’s architectural fabric, Paul showed interest in the project from the beginning of his reign. Several early Christian buildings, including the benediction loggia and old belfry, still stood in front of the basilica when he assumed the tiara. Only thirty days after his election, Paul appointed a congregation of three cardinals (Pallotta, Giustiniani and Arigoni) to supervise the finances of the basilica and make recommendations for work on it. There was no consensus over how to proceed, with opinions differing on three issues: what to do with the remaining structure of the Constantinian basilica and atrium; whether the nave should be completed in the form of a Latin or a Greek cross; and the nature of the new design for the façade. The congregation was divided, whilst Cesare Baronio, a respected theologian and historian, headed a formidable movement opposing the destruction of the remains of the old church. The committee also debated whether to revert to Michelangelo’s centralised design for the nave or to heed arguments such as those published by Cardinal Carlo Borromeo in 1577, which advocated the early Christian Latin-cross form. The first issue was settled in September 1605, when Paul accepted the committee’s decision to tear down most of the old structures. Shortly thereafter several architects, including Carlo Maderno, Flaminio Ponzio and
Giovanni Fontana, submitted designs for the new nave and façade. In March 1607 work began on the nave, following Maderno's designs, and in the following September work on the façade was commenced on papal orders. On 10 February 1608 a foundation medal (fig. 2) was put in place and the first stone of the façade was laid. This activity seems to have been at Paul's urging, rather than as a result of any negotiated agreement between the advisory congregation and the Curia, for an avviso issued on 16 April 1608 reports: 'Stando sin hora irresoluti: se vogliano [sic] continuare nel principiato modo ... che è di Michelangelo Bonarota.' After further debates, the congregation finally agreed to accept Maderno's design on 16 June 1608.

It has been argued that Paolo Sanquirico's foundation medal, issued early in 1608, is a valid record of the architectural intentions for the façade. Yet it appears to have been cast several months before Maderno's design for the façade was accepted, when numerous other options - not only for the nave, but also for the façade - were still being debated. Rather than a statement of conviction about a specific design, distributing the medal as part of the foundation ceremony would appear rather to have been an official declaration of the pope's determination to proceed with the work and complete St Peter's. Sanquirico must have known the earlier foundation medal of 1506 that commemorated Julius II's project of renovating the old basilica: the work of Cristoforo Caradosso, it celebrated Bramante's architectural design, with the facade reproduced on the reverse (fig. 3). Sanquirico's medal also shows the façade, is the same size, and, further associating his design with Caradosso's, is cast, a relatively expensive type of production that was not often used by this time. The medal's design, in paralleling Paul's project with Julius II's early sixteenth-century work on the basilica, asserted the pope's desire to finish what Julius had begun.

The 'completion' of the façade was celebrated on two somewhat dissimilar medals by Giacomo Antonio Moro. On the reverse of one, issued between 1 January and 15 May 1613, the medallist focussed almost exclusively on the façade: the drum, dome, and side apses are dwarfed by the façade, which covers most of the field. The other shows the two campanili that Paul planned to add, a decision announced in 1611 (fig. 4).

While most of old St Peter's was destroyed during Paul's papacy, the edifice providing access to the Vatican palace was left standing. This was probably saved because of its ceremonial importance, for it was used during papal processions, when the pope and his entourage returned to the Vatican after passing through the Borgo Nuovo. As the area in front of the new basilica was cleared, the old edifice served as the entrance to the palace from the Piazza S. Pietro.


8. Moro: Paul V / The confessio of St. Peter's, 1617/18, silver, 38 mm., British Museum.
Between 1617 and 1618 a loggia and clock-tower were added to it, and the wall connecting the entrance to the basilica was also embellished: the Navicella, the celebrated mosaic by Giotto depicting Christ calming the storm, a symbol of the protection offered by the Church, had been painstakingly dismantled when the Constantinian atrium was destroyed in 1610, but now restored, it was attached to the wall to the left of the entrance.

Between 16 May and 31 December 1617 a medal with an image of the entrance was produced, and another medal showing the restoration and embellishments was issued a year or so later. While the medal of 1617 does not situate the entrance (fig. 5), the medal from Paul's fourteenth regnal year (16 May 1618 to 15 May 1619) shows the entrance in context (fig. 6). However, the medallist, Giacomo Antonio Moro, has used liberal artistic licence in rendering the scene. The entrance is depicted frontally in the centre of the medal, whilst several parts of the complex are compressed or realigned: one of the columns on the new portico is included, and the wall connecting the entrance to the basilica is angled so as to show the Navicella, which would not be visible if the perspective were ‘truthful’.

While the Navicella may at first seem to be unimportant in this context, it is a key to understanding how the papacy characterised itself. It can hardly be a coincidence that around the time that the mosaic was dismantled a medal was issued that showed Christ calming the storm, the very scene rendered by Giotto (fig. 7). In depicting this story, Rancetti was glorifying Paul’s vigilance in preserving sacred objects from the old complex, efforts which Jacopo Grimaldi was to document in the text and engravings of his publication of 1619. The appearance of the scene on the medal extolled Paul’s work on the entrance, providing a broad allusion to his restoration projects on the basilica, the piazza, and the palace. This is somewhat paradoxical given that so many old structures were destroyed in the ‘restoration’ process.

As the ancient buildings in front of the new basilica were demolished in the early years of Paul’s reign, numerous monuments to popes, cardinals and bishops, and tombs, relics, and altars were unearthed and transported with great pomp and ceremony, usually to the grotte beneath the new basilica, as recorded by Grimaldi. The Roman Catholic authorities were eager to stress the physical evidence, including the bodies of deceased saints and other relics, that they felt proved the superiority of their tradition over its northern nemesis, Protestantism, and several such translations took place between 1606 and 1613.

Between 1606 and 1617 Paul replaced the temporary structure built under Clement VIII to protect the high altar and the shrine of St Peter’s tomb, which was located slightly to the west of the central crossing. In doing so, he opened up access to the basilica’s grotte by means of two symmetrical curving stairways. A medal showing the different floor levels of the resulting structure was issued between 16 May 1617 and 15 May 1618, to celebrate the achievement (fig. 8). The text on the reverse of the medal celebrates the subterranean part of the project, the confessio, or confessional of the apostles Peter and Paul: SACRA PETRI CONFESSIO EXORNATA (The sacred confessional of Peter beautified). However, the image created by the medallist, Giacomo Antonio Moro, includes not only the stairs leading down to the grotte and the confessio but also the high altar and baldachin. The baldachin design was novel: a flat, tasselled canopy resting on poles held by angels, it replaced a more permanent stone structure with a cupola resting on four columns. This was a progressive step away from the traditional type, and the design was later to inspire Bernini when he came to make his more permanent baldachin in bronze. Its form derives directly from the portable canopy held above the pope during formal processions, and also over the Holy Sacrament and the relics of the Passion. Just such a baldachin appears on the obverse of Moro’s medal celebrating the completion of the façade of St. Peter’s (fig. 9): a non-specific procession winds around Paul’s cope with a canopied baldachin appearing directly below the pope’s head.

Just as work at St Peter’s began shortly after Paul assumed the papal throne, work began at the Quirinal within thirty-seven days of his coronation, and architectural modifications and artistic embellishment to the papal palace and its gardens were constant projects throughout his reign. The extensive additions and construction he initiated can be broken down into three phases: Flaminio Ponzio’s long wing to the east (1605-12); the datary wing that ran to the north-west and the renovation of the palace’s rooms overlooking the courtyard (1609-13); and Carlo Maderno’s work on the Salone Corrazziere, the Cappella Paolina, and the monumental entrance to the palace from the Piazza del Quirinale on the west façade (1613-15) (fig. 10).

Paul much preferred to stay at the Quirinal Palace rather than in the Vatican, which was the customary papal residence. Since 1583 popes, who used the palace as a summer retreat, had made architectural
improvements to what had been a modest villa. Paul, however, made the palace suitable for year-round habitation, with four west-facing rooms overlooking the datary courtyard among the additions that made the palace more hospitable. He also planned a new processional route between the Quirinal and the Vatican, which was never realised. This would have begun at a garden gateway at the Quirinal, made use of a new street connecting the palace to the Piazza di Spagna, travelled along the Via dei Condotti, passed the Piazza Borghese, and ended at the Vatican.25

The Quirinal was increasingly an area of private development for the Borghese throughout Paul’s reign. Between 1606 and 1608 his brothers added smaller vignette to the Vigna Vecchia, land that the pope had inherited from his father in 1574, and which was eventually consolidated to form the park of Scipione’s Villa Borghese.26 Paul and Scipione, both jointly and independently, purchased other vignette during the same period, increasing the Borghese land holdings between the Via Pinciana, the Via delle Tre Madonne, the Via Trasversa, and the Muro Torto. Work on Scipione’s Villa Borghese casino, close to the Quirinal palace, began in 1613, and the shell of the building was largely completed by the time the papal medals of the Quirinal Palace were issued.

An unsigned medal from 1615 has an orthogonal representation of the palace,27 as does a medal, signed by Giacomo Antonio Moro, issued the following year (fig. 11). On both medals, the palace exterior, rather than being depicted ‘truthfully’, is rearranged and compressed in order to stress the work undertaken by Paul: the west side is shown frontally and the east façade tilts upwards to display his early work on the palace. The bird’s-eye perspective shows the building comprehensively, with only the datary missing, perhaps because it would have compromised the symmetry of the building, or because it housed mundane records. The entrances constructed under Paul, which gave onto public spaces, are highly visible: one opens out onto the Piazza del Quirinale and the other borders the Via Pia. The grandeur of the building is, however, toned down by the rows of uniform windows and the roughly incised roofs. With the exception of the nondescript plinth-like structure below the palace, the site is contextualised on neither medal; no reference is made to other buildings, to the extensive private gardens, or to the Quirinal hill, with its expanses of Borghese land.

Curiously, the earlier unsigned medal, although depicting the palace’s exterior, bears an inscription alluding to concurrent interior projects: the construction of Marian chapels.28 Under Paul, three such chapels were built or embellished: Guido Reni decorated the Cappella dell’Annunziata with Marian frescoes for the pope’s personal use in 1609–10; the Cappella del Presepio was built between 1605 and 1612; and the Cappella Paolina was constructed to accommodate relatively large crowds in 1615–18.29 Rather than being presented as a residence, the principal legend on the reverse refers to the palace as a house of worship: SACELLVM IN PALATIO QVIRIN (The chapel in the Quirinal Palace). A secondary inscription in the exergue, PONTIFICVM COMMODITATI (For the convenience of the popes), which recalls as the principal legend on Moro’s medal, suggests that the building has been constructed for the convenience of the popes. The obverses also emphasise Paul’s devotion, for religious iconography is included on his clothing. On the unsigned medal a figure of St Paul appears on the cope, with a head of Christ on the morsa. The cope on Rancetti’s medal has two panels, one of which contains
an angel, whilst the other has a shepherd and lamb; the
Virgin and Child are depicted in the morse, whilst an
eagle peeks out below the cope, thus associating one of
the pope’s heraldic symbols with the ecclesiastical
images.

A medal depicting the entrance to the large public
Marian chapel in the south-west wing of the palace first
appeared as the subject of a medal issued during Paul’s
thirteenth regnal year (fig. 12). The chapel, built
purposely to have the same dimensions as Sixtus IV’s
Cappella Sistina at the Vatican, was consecrated in
honour of the Virgin in 1617.30 A different version of
this medal was produced by Moro between 16 May and
31 December 1619 (fig. 13), possibly to coincide with
the marriage on 20 October 1619 of Marcantonio
Borghese and Camilla Orsini, which was presided over
by Paul and celebrated in the chapel. Part of the
scrolled decoration that appears on the cope on the
earlier medal is replaced on the later version with a
representation of Peter receiving the keys from Christ.
This oft-repeated scene signifies Christ’s recognition of
Peter as his vicar and protector of Catholicism, and, by
extension, points to the contemporary pope as his direct
heir. The reverses of both medals portray the double
doors leading into the Pauline chapel, which support
Taddei Landini’s sixteenth-century marble relief. This
relief, which depicts Christ washing the apostles’ feet
before the Last Supper, was removed from the Cappella
Gregoriana during Paul’s work on St Peter’s and placed
in the Quirinal palace.31 The medallion representation of
the relief is “truthful”; however, the inscription below it, just
above the door (PAVLVS), is contrived.32 Although it
has been argued that the medallist chose to represent
the chapel by showing the doorway because it was
artistically easy, I believe that the decision rested not on
this technical aspect, but rather on the importance of
including appropriate imagery.33 It appears that by the
time of Paul’s pontificate it was customary for the pope
to re-enact Christ’s washing of the apostles’ feet on
Maundy Thursdays by ceremonially washing the feet of
thirteen ‘apostles’ and distributing medals to each
participant.34 A medal by Gaspare Mola, with Paul’s
portrait on the obverse and a reverse image of Christ
washing the apostles’ feet, was issued between 16 May
1618 and 15 May 1619 (fig. 14); this was possibly
distributed at the ceremony of 1619.

12. Unknown artist: Cappella Paolina of the Quirinal Palace,
1617/18, lead, 48mm., British Museum.

14. Mola: Paul V / Christ washing the apostles’ feet, 1618/19,
bronze, 26mm., British Museum.

13. Moro: Cappella Paolina of the Quirinal Palace, 1619,
bronze, 49mm., British Museum.
Paul’s devotion to the Virgin was also expressed at Rome’s pre-eminent Marian shrine, S. Maria Maggiore, which was the subject of several Pauline medals. His official involvement with the church began well before his papacy, for he had been made its vicar on 9 August 1577, a position he held until 1588.35 His tenure at the church, which he later selected as the site of the Borghese family tomb and his own burial chapel, was extremely important in terms of both his religious development and his career: his devotion to the Virgin was formalised, and his position placed him in contact with Sixtus V (1585-90). Both Sixtus and his cardinal nephew, Alessandro Peretti Montalto, soon noticed Borghese’s apparent devotion to the Virgin, and his interest in the church was made manifest by both his routine Friday visits to the basilica and his artistic patronage. As vicar, he commissioned Jacopo Zucchi to paint representations of the miracle of the snow and the procession of Gregory the Great; these were to flank the tabernacle in the nave, which housed the basilica’s prized Hodedefria icon of the Virgin and Child, believed either to have been painted by St Luke or to be a sketch by Luke finished by angels.36 In 1588 Cardinal Montalto began to take a close interest in Borghese, making him vice-legate to Bologna and his personal deputy.

The future pope’s vicariate of S. Maria Maggiore coincided with the building there of the Sistine burial chapel, designed by Domenico Fontana and built between 1585 and 1589. He would also have witnessed the construction of new and improved roads under Sixtus and the work on the cardinal nephew’s Villa Montalto nearby. Paul’s interventions at the church are remarkably similar to those undertaken by Sixtus: both popes altered the church’s architectural fabric, its piazza, and the streets nearby, and both incorporated the devotional objects housed in the church - the icon of the Virgin, the presepio (Christ’s manger), the body of St Jerome, and the relics of the Holy Innocents - into their building programmes. Sixtus’s major projects at the site included moving an obelisk to the north piazza, building new tombs for Nicholas IV and Pius V, constructing his own burial chapel, and transferring the remains of St Jerome and the presepio into it.37 Paul’s projects almost mirror these.38 He improved what became the via Paolina, moved an antique column from the Basilica of Maxentius to the south piazza, built a funeral chapel for himself and Clement VIII, translated a miraculous icon of the Virgin into it, constructed a burial crypt for the Borghese, and completed work on the baptistery and sacristy. On the Pauline medals, the Borghese pope’s projects were subtly differentiated from those of the Peretti pope.

As pope, Paul consciously placed himself in relation to Sixtus. An avviso of 25 June 1605 states that, ‘Nostro Signore risolve far la cappella nella S. Maria Maggiore ricostro a quella di Sisto, ove vuol essere sepellito’ indicating Paul’s desire to build his burial chapel as a pendant to that of Sixtus.39 In contrast to the work at St Peter’s, for which Paul blessed the foundation stone at the Quirinal and had it set in place by Cardinal Palotta, he personally placed the foundation stone (and possibly a foundation medal) on 9 August 1605.40 By 1608 the architectural body of the chapel was completed up to the cupola; the dome and most of the internal decoration was finished by 1610, and a papal bull naming Scipione Borghese as its protector and patron was issued in 1615.41 Sixtus’s chapel provided the model for the floor plan (fig. 15), and also initially for the elevation, as can be seen in a Pauline
medal of 1605, thought to be by Ambrosio Bosio, which may have served as a foundation medal (fig. 16). A comparison between Fiaminio Ponzi’s design for the Pauline chapel, as depicted on the medal, and Fontana’s engraving of the Sistine chapel shows the architectural similarities between their elevations. It almost seems as though the engraving was transcribed onto the medal: the chapel has the same number of stories and bays as its Sistine counterpart; a dome and balustrade embellished with decorative sculptures appear on both; the arrangement of the windows is the same, with similar niches, pediments, and frames; even the representations correspond, with both showing the chapel raised on a plinth, and with the structure spilling over the border on the medal, and in the engraving overlapping the beaded frame and extending to the edge of the embossing. Neither building is depicted in context.

The design for the Pauline chapel, however, evolved significantly, as can be seen from two slightly later medals, which, although they have been considered independently, have not previously been looked at as a pair. One, issued between 16 May 1606 and 15 May 1607, bears Rancetti’s signature (fig. 17). A payment was made to Rancetti in 1606 two days before the feast of Sts Peter and Paul, indicating that he provided the annual medal for Paul’s second regnal year: ‘Adi 27 Giugno 1606 ... ho visto pesare medaglie d’oro centodottai fatte da Giorgio Rancetti per la distribuzione da fare questo presente anno 1606.’ The fact that the S. Maria Maggiore medal is struck, small in size, and dated to the regnal year suggests that this was the annuale. The image on the reverse depicts the chapel under construction, with muratori or scarpellini busily working on the walls. This is probably a realistic reflection of the stage construction had reached around the time the medal was issued, on 29 June 1606. The other medal, which seems to be the work of Leonardo Benvenuti and was issued between 16 May and 31 December 1606 (fig. 18), is similar to Rancetti’s: it is struck and of the same size, and, as on Rancetti’s medal, the chapel is depicted under construction. The workers, however, are more numerous and positioned differently, and the building is also altered, though it is difficult to determine if it is rendered in a more or less advanced state.

Both medals show a change from the earlier foundation medal: whereas the earlier medal showed five bays in a rectangular structure, these have seven, with two wings flanking a trapezoidal projection. They record the Pauline chapel’s design moving away from its Sistine neighbour, so that it no longer mimics Sixtus’s work, but instead engages in a dialogue of difference—perhaps even competition. Because the medals actively show the changes being made, with construction
workers caught literally in mid-hammer strike or half way up a ladder, they assert the independence (and, perhaps, superiority) of the Pauline burial chapel from its Sistine counterpart. They are also eloquent expressions of Paul's desire to complete the chapel quickly, and suggest the rapid pace of building that he demanded. Equally, the portrayal of building activity may allude to his concurrent work on the basilica's sacristy and baptistery. However, an avviso issued on 13 February 1608 indicated that Paul disliked the way work had progressed on the sacristy, which perhaps explains why it was not included among the Pauline additions to the basilica commemorated by medals.47

Paul's burial chapel was celebrated in its completed state on a medal distributed as the annuale for his eighth regnal year (fig. 19). Also during this year, on 27 January 1613, the miraculous image of the Virgin was translated from the left side of the nave to the altar in the pope's burial chapel.48 During the translation ceremony, the Virgin was linked with two saints, St Francesca Romana and St Carlo Borromeo, whose recent canonisations under Paul had been celebrated on papal medals issued in 1608 and 1610:49 a macchina holding the icon and the saints' relics was carried through Rome, before returning to the church where Paul waited, kneeling, in a side chapel dedicated to S. Carlo.50 By incorporating the two saints into the programme, Paul subtly extended the scope of Marian devotion.

Later Pauline projects at the basilica continued to parallel Sixtus's work. Just as Sixtus had moved an obelisk to the church's northern piazza, Paul moved the last monolithic column from the Basilica of Maxentius to the southern piazza, exorcised and blessed it, and crowned it with a statue of the Virgin.51 As a Sistine medal celebrated the transposition of the obelisk,52 so a Pauline medal portrayed the column in front of S. Maria Maggiore (fig. 20). On both the obelisk is placed centrally on the medal, extending vertically across the entire field. On the later medal an inscription on the massive pedestal reads PAVLVS V, a much shorter text than that on the actual pedestal. The Pauline chapel's drum and dome are depicted to the left, but the Sistine chapel is almost entirely excluded from view, just managing to peek from behind the Romanesque campanile. Were the representation a realistic view, the Sistine chapel would be much more visible than it appears in Moro's contrived depiction.

The Pauline allusion to Sixtus continued as a theme in papal medals of public works, particularly those celebrating the Acqua Paola and its fountain on the Janiculum.53 Two Pauline medals of the aqueduct and one of the fountain, all by different medallists, were produced. Issued in rapid succession between 16 May 1609 and 31 December 1610, they were conceived in relation to one another, all sharing an inscription indicating that the work was carried out 'for the convenience of the public'. As a group, they associate contemporary Rome with the engineering triumphs of the ancient city, while projecting a message of Paul's interest in the welfare of the people. The project did, indeed, satisfy a pressing public need, but it also enhanced the Vatican palace gardens, an area used to impress papal visitors, by providing them with several fountains. Rather than drawing attention to these benefits, however, it is the connection between Paul and the public good that is emphasised in the medals.

Work on the Acqua Paola officially began in 1607, though avvisi show papal interest in the project as early as November 1605.54 Lack of an adequate water supply in the Vatican, Borgo, and Trastevere was a pressing issue from the start of Paul's pontificate. In 1599 a
flood had disrupted the supply brought from the Acqua Felice across the Ponte Rotto, and work on the piazza S. Pietro had also destroyed a public fountain. In August 1608 Paul purchased from Virgino Orsini the rights to the springs near Bracciano, where the Aqua Triana originated, for twenty-five thousand scudi. Giovanni Fontana and Pompeo Targone subsequently embarked on making functional the ancient aqueduct, which had been built under Trajan to carry water from Bracciano to Trastevere.

It is likely that one of the two medals issued to celebrate this accomplishment, a medal by Benvenuti, served as the annuale for Paul’s fifth regnal year, since it is struck and bears no calendar date (fig. 21). The obverse shows Paul in a ceremonial cope, with the mors turned towards the viewer, so that its crucifixion image is visible. On the reverse the fifty-eight kilometre Acqua Paola is shown traversing the campagna. The artist has made full use of the available space, with the aqueduct winding back and forth, fitting neatly within the medal’s circular frame. This compositional device stresses the length of the aqueduct, which surpassed that of Sixtus V’s Acqua Felice. Though the campagna is depicted in a generalised way, Benvenuti ensures that the viewer understands that the aqueduct leads to Rome, for a gate, probably the Porta S. Pancrazio, appears at the lower left.

Rancetti’s medal of the same subject (fig. 22) focusses on the sharp curve of the aqueduct that appears close to the centre on Benvenuti’s medal. A line in a contemporary inscription placed on the aqueduct just outside Porta S. Pancrazio draws attention to one particular feature of its engineering: FLEXXOVA CVRSV XXXV. MILLIARIVM (Over a sinuous course of 35 miles). A large part of Fontana and Targone’s engineering work involved controlling the force of the water as it flowed from Bracciano to Rome, and the Z-shaped segment shown on the medal was one of the devices used to regulate the flow. The medal reminds the viewer of the incredible gush of water coursing along the aqueduct, the abundance of water brought to Rome, and the pope’s role in accomplishing it.

The inclusion of the word RESTITIVIT (He restored it) in the reverse inscriptions of both medals suggests that the Acqua Paola drew heavily on the pre-existing, antique aqueduct, and that Fontana and Targone headed a restoration rather than a new building project. This interpretation would probably have appealed to Paul, stressing as it does the project’s Roman lineage and casting him, in effect, in the role of a modern Roman emperor. In fact, the inscription is somewhat misleading, for little of Trajan’s aqueduct was of any constructional value by the seventeenth century.

The funding of the project was a potential source of acrimony between the Camera Apostolica and the municipality of Rome. Not only were the Vatican gardens to be supplied with water, but avvisi indicate that there were plans for a mill that would have generated income for the papacy, and perhaps even for the Borghese and other noble families. According to Pastor, Paul contributed four hundred thousand scudi to the project, but ‘demanded the co-operation’ (that is, financial support) of the Roman municipality, which he eventually received. The medals, which present the work unequivocally as a public service, were perhaps also partly intended to point out to the Roman municipality the value of its investment.

The Acqua Paola fountain, the ornamental mostra at the end of the aqueduct, was designed by Flaminio Ponzio, finished in 1611, and named after Paul. Perched on a bluff, Ponzio’s structure is grandiose, and highly visible throughout Rome even today (fig. 23).
The mammoth attic and aedicule give the impression that the single-storey work is far more massive than it actually is. Attached Ionic columns and arched recesses draw the eye up to the inscription on the upper, false façade. The fountain was celebrated in a medal executed by Sanquirico and issued in 1610 (fig. 24). Both the papal portrait on the obverse and the depiction of the fountain on the reverse play down any notion of splendour, instead crafting an image of the papacy that is appropriately modest for celebrating its beneficence. Paul is shown in humble garb, his hooded cloak and simple cap contrasting markedly with the embroidered copes he usually wears in medallion portraits. The fountain is not embellished, but water flows abundantly, stressing the structure’s functionality. The minimal inscription (PAVLVS. P.M.), which is different from that on the actual fountain, asserts that the project is Paul’s. After the completion of the Acqua Paola, Paul commissioned Carlo Maderno to build three new fountains for the Vatican gardens, which would use water from the aqueduct: the Fontana degli Specchi, the Fontana delle Torri, and the Fontana dello Scoglio.\(^{62}\) A seven-and-a-half metre high pyramid also spouted Acqua Paola water in the Piazza S. Pietro,\(^{63}\) and was described enthusiastically by Domenico Fontana: “the waters rise in thick masses into the air; they then rush down like rivers from the shells into the basins, with such a roar that they call forth the greatest admiration.”\(^{64}\)

The Acqua Paola and its fountain clearly parallel Sixtus V’s Acqua Felice and Moses fountain (figs. 25, 26), but Paul made his project appear more monumental than that of Sixtus.\(^{65}\) The highly visible position and massive inscription of the Acqua Paola fountain provided a grander display than its predecessor. Moreover, some of the water from the aqueduct, which was originally intended to terminate on the Trastevere side of the Tiber, was channeled across the Ponte Sisto and emerged in a fountain placed prominently on the wall of Sixtus’s Ospedale dei Mendicanti. This fountain, designed by Giovanni Fontana and Jan van Santen and erected in 1613, included dragons, which spouted the water, and a large decorative surround supporting an inscription bearing Paul’s name. The ensemble towered over Sixtus’s nearby, seemingly diminutive inscription over the entrance to the Ospedale. Strategically placed at the terminus of the via Giulia, it provided a visual connection between Paul’s works on both banks of the Tiber, which would have been even more effective if the pope’s plans for the road connecting the Ponte Sisto with the Acqua Paola had been carried out.

In exploring Paul’s relationship to Sixtus, Matteo Greuter’s 1618 map of Rome is a useful tool, for perhaps at Paul’s urging, since there was papal approval for the map’s publication - Greuter deliberately compares Pauline and Sistine projects (fig. 27). The projects of the two popes are aligned horizontally.
Paul's are on the left-hand side: antique columns capped by sculptures, the Cappella Paola in S. Maria Maggiore, a cross-section of St Peter's, two images of the Quirinal Palace, one of the Acqua Paola, another showing its fountain, and an overview of the Vatican complex that places the site in an urban context. Depictions of Sixtus' projects are placed on the right-hand side: the antique obelisks moved by the pope, his burial chapel in S. Maria Maggiore, the Campidoglio, a bird's-eye view of the Quirinal Palace, the Acqua Felice fountain, the Scala Santa, and a plan of St Peter's and its confessio. Paul's association with Sixtus had a propagandistic value, but it also promoted a comparison, with Paul's projects surpassing those of Sixtus in their scale and impact. It is significant that the images on the map emphasise the same projects that appear on Pauline medals.

Deliberate comparisons between Pauline and Sixtine projects were made on the medals. Those of the Acqua Felice and Acqua Paola are strikingly similar, and yet subtly differentiated. Both show their respective aqueducts snaking through the campagna, but on the Sistine medal an allegorical female figure stands on the Peretti heraldic monte with the aqueduct in the background. By contrast, the Pauline medal focusses exclusively on the aqueduct, leaving allegory aside. Prior to Paul's pontificate, the reverses of post-Tridentine papal medals often included biblical figures and
allegories, or consisted solely of inscriptions. With the exception of a medal of Christ calming the storm and two showing him washing the apostles’ feet, no such Pauline medals were produced. Absent, too, are medals bearing abstractions of papal munificence and wealth: there are no equivalents of, for example, Sixtus’s medals of the heraldic Peretti lion guarding a symbolic treasure chest or a medal produced under Gregory XIV of an allegorical female figure holding a wheat-filled cornucopia. Instead, most of Paul’s medals depict images of actual projects. In showing his work in a tangible, ‘real’ manner, they celebrate his achievements through an idiom that stresses a direct connection between the pontiff and the project. But, if the reverses of Paul’s medals generally eschew allegorical or ecclesiastical symbols, the images on the obverses, specifically on the panels of the copes he wears, act as vessels for theological messages. Religious iconography on the same side of the medal as the papal portrait, literally clothing Paul, created a psychological association between the pope and pontifical authority.

Rather than celebrating a diverse body of papal works, the Pauline medals centre on a limited number of projects: St. Peter’s and the Vatican, the Quirinal, S. Maria Maggiore, and civic improvements. These same projects are highlighted on Matteo Greuter’s map, as well as in the Pauline fresco cycles in the halls of the Vatican palace. The Pauline medals, together with these other artistic programmes, aimed to construct an image of the papacy that was as contrived as it was persuasive, highlighting papal projects that were central to Rome and the Church; they illustrated papal beneficence, and yet asserted papal authority.

NOTES
2. For papal medals, including those of Paul V, see Claude du Molinet, Historia summorum pontificum a Martino V ad Innocentium XI per eorum nominatim (Paris, 1679); Filippo Bonanni, Numismata pontificum romanorum guae a temporis Martino V ad Innocentium XI... (Rome, 1699); Ridolfo Venuti, Numismata romanorum pontificum praestantiora a Martino V ad Benedictum XIV (Rome, 1744); Franco Bartolotti, La medaglia annuale dei romani pontefici (Rimini, 1967); Nathan Whitman with John Varriano, Roma revenges: papal medals from the age of the Baroque (Ann Arbor, 1983); John Varriano, ‘Alexander VII, Bernini, and the Baroque papal medal’, Studies in the History of Art, xxi (1987), pp. 249–60. Information on Paul’s medals is also included in Edoardo Martinoni, Annali della zecca di Roma: Clemente VIII, Leone XI, Paolo V (Rome, 1919), pp. 73–133.
3. For technical information on the production of medals, see Jennifer Montagu, Gold, silver and bronze (Princeton, 1996), pp. 73, 293; Whitman with Varriano, Roma revenges, p. 53. The reverse medal illustrated here is a cast example taken from a struck original.
10. Pastor, History, xxvi, pp. 55–6; Magnuson, Rome in the age of Bernini, i, p. 105. Scipione’s Villa Borghese was only one of his properties in the area; see Howard Hibbard, ‘Scipione Borghese’s garden palace on the Quirinal’, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, xxiii (1964), pp. 163–89.
11. Several avvisi issued in the first years of Paul’s pontificate demonstrate his involvement in the project. For examples, see Orbaan, Documenti, pp. 3, 7, 10, 47–9.
12. Pastor, History, xxvi, p. 37; for the avviso issued to report the creation of the congregation, see Orbaan, Documenti, p. 33.
16. Whitman with Varriano, Roma revenges, p. 53: ‘by its very nature the medal issued in connection with the foundation ceremony provides no information on the plan of the nave, but it is a valuable document on the architect’s intentions for the façade.’
18. Bartolotti, La medaglia annuale, p. 10; Whitman with Varriano, Roma revenges, p. 53.
19. Pastor, History, xxvi, p. 393; Hibbard, Carlo Maderno, pp. 161, 174; Varriano, ‘Alexander VII’, p. 70. Hibbard dates Paul’s order to 2 September 1612, but Varriano claims his decision was announced on 2 September 1611.
23. For more on the baldachin, see Irving Lavin, Bernini and the crowning of St Peter’s (New York, 1968), pp. 4–6, and William Chandler Kirwin, Powers matches: the pontificate of Urban VIII, the baldachin, and Gian Lorenzo Bernini (New York, 1997), pp. 80–81.
27. Whitman with Varriano, Roma revenges, p. 60. I would like to thank Georgia Clarke for drawing my attention to this.
31. For photographic images of the door, see Borsi, Il Palazzo del Quirinale, lugs. 28, 30.
32. For the complete argument, see Whitman with Varriano, Roma revenges, p. 61. Its essence is that, ‘the medallist avoids the complex problems of perspective that such an interior view would present.’
33. Montagu, Gold, silver and bronze, p. 74. Unfortunately, Montagu does not explain the ceremony in detail, nor does she give a citation.
34. For interpretations of Paul’s involvement at S. Maria Maggiore, see Anna Maria Panzer, ‘La basilica dalla fine del secolo XI alla fine del secolo XVI’, in U. Poletti (editor), Santa Maria

36. For more on the miraculous icon and Paul’s interest in it, see Ostrow, *Art and spirituality*, pp. 120-26.

37. For Sixtus V and his building projects, see Pastor, *History*, xxi-xxii. For his work at S. Maria Maggiore, see Panzera, 'La basilica', pp. 160-71.


42. Whitman with Varriano, *Roma resurgens*, p. 59. Although the two chapels are often paired, a study concentrating specifically on the architecture of the two structures has yet to be made.

43. For Fontana’s engraving, see Giovanni Giacomo de’ Rossi, *Disegni da vari Autori e cappelle* (Rome, 1713), figs. 40-42.

44. They have, though, been mistaken for the same medal issued with different signatures. See Whitman with Varriano, *Roma resurgens*, pp. 57-9.


46. The examples illustrated here of both this medal and the S. Maria Maggiore medal of 1606 are cast copies of struck originals.


52. Bonanni, *Numismata pontificum romanorum*, p. 381, no. XXXI.

53. It should be noted that papal medals of the fortress of Ferrara and bridge at Ceprano were issued, but are not dealt with here because of space constraints.


57. For details on the scale of the project, see Christoph H. Heilmann, ‘Acqua Paola and the urban planning of Paul V’, *Burlington Magazine*, xxii (1970), pp. 656-63.

58. The full inscription is given in Molinet, *Historia summorum pontificum*, p. 148, as: FORMIS AQUAE ALSIETINAE OLIM AB AVGSTO CAESARE EXTRVCTIS, MOX COLLAPSIS, AB ADRIANO PONTIFICIE MOX INSTAVRATIS, I SDEM BVRSYS VETVSTATE, DIVRITVS, OPERE SVBTERRANEO ET ARCVAUTO RESTITVITVS, AQUAM EX AGRO BRACCIAENSI DITIONIS VRURNORVM, SALVBRORIBVS FONTIVS DERIVVAM, FLEXVSO CVRSV XXXV. MILLARUVM IN VRBEM PERDYXIT ANNO SALVITVS M. DC. XI. (He restored the fabric of the Aqua Alsietina, once built by Caesar Augustus and then collapsed, then restored by Pope Hadrian, and again collapsed through old age, in its subterranean parts and its arches; he also brought to the city water from the area of Bracciano in the s.way of the Orsini, derived from healthier springs, over a sinuous course of 35 miles, in the year of our Salvation 1611). I would like to thank Jonathan Williams, Lee Burnett and Xavier Salomon for their assistance with translating the Latin texts in this article.

59. Contemporary *avvis* that mention the aqueduct often discuss the volume of the water flow. See Orbaan, *Documents*, pp. 212, 215, 243.


3. Unknown artist: Jan Laski, 1557, lead, 64 mm, National Museum, Poznan.