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Pisanello and the Invention of the Renaissance Medal

By and large, our understanding of the nature of Renaissance art involves a quadrangular conception of the period that stems ultimately from the art-historical and art-theoretical writings of the Renaissance itself, elaborated by Vasari and codified in modern times by Warburg and Panofsky. In this view the Renaissance revulsion from the Middle Ages was accompanied by an equal and opposite propulsion toward antiquity and the exploration of the natural world. Antiquity and naturalism were thought of as handmaidens of the Renaissance, the one stimulating and reinforcing the other to achieve a synthesis that would come to be characterized as »classical« harmony and balance. These cultural developments arose from an underlying sea-change in human psychology defined by Jacob Burckhardt as the Renaissance rediscovery of the individual. And the whole phenomenon was regarded as having its geographical epicenter in Italy, where it overcame the medieval tradition that Vasari identified by that opprobrious term »Gothic.« Although this four-part construction of the Renaissance – antiquity, naturalism, individualism, Italy – still stands, and no doubt will continue to predominate in our historical imagination, it is by now well-established that the period also witnessed a variety of exceptional, alternative, or even antithetical developments. Evidence for such deviation from the mainstream is present from the very beginning of the Renaissance process of self-definition, when Lorenzo Ghiberti in his brief sketch of the history of post-classical art, lavishes his greatest praise in sculpture not on an Italian, but on Master Gusmin of Cologne¹. Given the nature of Ghiberti's art one cannot assume that his interest in Master Gusmin was related to the irrational and expressionistic strain in Italian art that has long been recognized as having been indebted to late medieval mystical tradition of Northern Europe². On the contrary, one must reckon with the possibility that the North may have helped lay the very foundations of Italian Renaissance naturalism. Certainly, the adoption in Italy later in the century of the oil technique bears witness to the persistent and sometimes revolutionary nature of the Italian debt to the North in precisely these terms.

However appropriate and important such acknowledgements of the Northern stylistic presence in the South during the period of the Renaissance may be, they remain peripheral to the classicism, humanism and individualism that lie at the core of Renaissance culture. Burckhardt rightly perceived that these latter concepts come together most specifically and explicitly in the Renaissance development of the independent, monumental portrait – the emblem of individuality *par excellence* – which in sculpture reassumed, with significant variations, the familiar forms that had been created in an-

tiquity: the free-standing figure, the equestrian monument, the bust and the medallion portrait³.

My purpose in this paper is to focus on one particular episode in this epochal process of creating the image of modern man – an episode of particular importance, not only because it involved the rebirth of one of these major forms of independent commemorative portraiture, but also because it challenges in a fundamental way the notion of the Renaissance revival of antiquity and rediscovery of the individual as an exclusively Italian achievement. I refer to the portrait medal, a pure «showpiece» distinguished from the numismatic portrait by its monumental scale, the fact that it is individually cast, not mechanically struck, and that it is not conceived as a medium of exchange. My argument concerns the genesis of the key work in this context, the first true medal since antiquity, made by Pisanello to commemorate the visit of the Byzantine emperor John VIII Paleologus to Italy to participate in the Council of 1438–39 that reunited the Eastern and Western churches as part of the effort to counter the threat of Turkish invasion (Fig. 1)⁴. This was the third and ultimate visit by successive Greek rulers to seek European aid. The idea of unity of East and West is expressed in the medal in two ways: the accompanying legends are given in Greek and Latin, that on the obverse naming the emperor in Greek, those on the reverse naming the artist in Greek and Latin; and in the scene on the reverse the emperor is shown adoring a Latin, rather than a Greek cross, illustrating his accession to the Catholic faith.

It has always been recognized that Pisanello's medal had two main late medieval precedents, neither of which is in itself sufficient to explain his achievement. One of these antecedents are a number of small (33–35 mm vs Pisanello's 101–04 mm) medals struck (not cast) in North Italy toward the end of the fourteenth century. Three were made for Francesco II da Carrara to celebrate his recovery of Padua from Giangaleazzo Visconti in 1390; clearly based on Roman coins, not medals, Francesco is shown in the guise of a Roman emperor (Fig. 2). Soon thereafter (1393) Roman coins again served as models for two small struck medals by Lorenzo and Marco Sesto representing the emperor Galba and the allegorical figure of Venice (Fig. 3)⁵. These works were the fruits of a vital North Italian tradition of numismatic study and collecting from the early part of the century, which included the Veronese antiquarian Giovanni Mansionario, and Petrarch⁶.

The second major precedent for Pisanello were the gold medallions of the emperors Constantine (86–95 mm) and Heraclius (94–96.5 mm) acquired by Jean Duc de Berry in 1402 (Figs. 4, 5)⁷. Although they are monumental in scale and clearly emulate ancient medals, the Constantine and Heraclius medallions, apart from stylistic considerations, are not true medals when compared to the ancient examples and Pisanello: because the two sides were cast separately and bonded together, as in goldsmith work; and because they do not represent contemporary personages. The equestrian figure of Constantine – which appears on the obverse, something that never happens in ancient medals – displays his Christianity by his resemblance, often observed, to the dashing equestrian knights surrounded by inscriptions depicted on medieval seals (see Fig. 10). In fact, the medallions are treated as two seals joined together. According to the Duke's inventory they were set in gem-encrusted frames, so their special, hybrid char-

acter, part classical medal, part precious relic, was evident⁸. This synthetic process, in which medieval traditions have been imbued with a new, commemorative and retrospective spirit that evokes antiquity, adumbrates the Renaissance.

CONSTANTINE

Obverse

Surround: CONSTANTINUS IN XPO DEO FIDELIS IMPERATOR ET MODERATOR ROMANORUM SEMPER AUGUSTUS («Constantine, faithful in Christ our God, leader and ruler of the Romans, Emperor forever»). This legend accompanying the equestrian Constantine follows a contemporary Greek chancery formula for Latin letters⁹.

Reverse

Surround: MIHI ABSIT GLORIARI NISI IN CRUCE DOMINI NOSTRI JHESU CHRISTI («God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ»). The text is a passage from Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (6.14 *Mihi autem absit gloriari, nisi in cruce Domini nostri Iesu Christi*), which is paraphrased in the first sentence of the introits of the Mass for the feasts of the Invention and the Exaltation of the Cross, May 3 and September 14¹⁰. The reverse shows two seated women, recently identified as Sarah and Hagar, flanking a tree from which a cross emerges¹¹. If the identification of the figures is correct, Sarah, the mature, fully draped figure who turns toward the cross would symbolize the Church of Christ, while the young, semi-nude Hagar, who turns away, represents the Old Testament.

HERACLIUS

The medallion of Heraclius has legends in Greek and Latin, appropriately since he was the Byzantine emperor on a mission to the west.

Obverse

Surround: «Heraclius, faithful in Christ our God, Emperor and Ruler of the Romans, victorious and triumphant, Emperor forever» (Greek)

Field: Left: APOLONIS (Greek); perhaps a name, but more probably a reference to the illuminating rays of the face of God. Right: ILLUMINA VULTUM TUUM DEUS («Cause thy face to shine, O God»); based on Ps 66.2: *Illuminet vultum suum super nos* («[God] cause his face to shine upon us»), which is quoted in the second sentence of the introits for the Invention and Exaltation of the Cross¹²; on the crescent, *Super tenebras nostras militabor in gentibus*. The last two legends, and perhaps the first, should be taken together to read: «O God, cause thy face to shine upon our darkness and I will make war among the heathen.»¹³

Reverse

Surround: SUPER ASPIDEM ET BASILISCUM AMBULAVIT ET CONCVLAVIT LEONEM ET DRACONEM (He has trodden on the asp and the basilisk and trampled on the lion and the dragon); quoted with variations from Ps. 90.13: *Super aspidem et basiliscum ambu-*

labile et conculcabis leonem et draconem (Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet)¹⁴.

Field: »Glory to Christ in the highest because he has broken the iron gates and freed the Holy Cross, during the reign of Heraclius« (Greek). The scene on the reverse refers to the story of Heraclius told in the Golden Legend and recited in the liturgy of the Exaltation. The emperor, intending to enter Jerusalem in triumph with the retrieved Cross, finds the way blocked until he enters in humility¹⁵.

The two medallions are patently complementary. They were not isolated, self-contained works, however, but formed part of a flourishing, quasi-humanistic culture at the Berry court, which included a rich collection of literary works by ancient authors and classically inspired objects¹⁶. Especially important was a group of gold pieces, now lost, that entered the Duke's collection by purchase at the same time as those of Constantine and Heraclius, which included medals of Augustus, Tiberius, and a plaque depicting Phillip the Arab. All these works evidently form a coherent group or series that traces what might be called the imperial history of Christianity: Christ was born under Augustus; he died under Tiberius; Phillip the Arab was the first emperor to adopt Christianity; Constantine, following his famous vision of the Cross with the words »In hoc signo vinces« and subsequent victory over Maxentius at the Milvian bridge, made Christianity the state religion; and Heraclius defeated the infidel and recovered the True Cross¹⁷. This distinct Christological focus is in sharp contrast with the largely historical and biographical numismatic interests of Italians like Mansionario and Petrarch, and it suggests a particular motivation.

The dramatic accretions to the Duke's collection reflect a major political and cultural enterprise that sought to establish a link between the ancient imperial tradition as represented by the Byzantine emperors and the western medieval tradition of the French king as *Rex Christianissimus*, the successor to Constantine as defender of the faith. Jean de Berry was the brother of Charles V and the uncle of the reigning Charles VI. The enterprise must have been motivated principally by the defeat of the Greek army by the Turks at Nicopolis in 1396. The Turkish conquest of Greece endangered Constantinople itself and posed an immediate threat to the Christian empire. In an effort to stem the tide the Byzantine emperor himself, Manuel II Paleologus (father of Pisanello's John VIII) visited Paris in 1400–02 to plead for a new crusade¹⁸. In this context, the medallion series served to verify the continuity of the imperial tradition on which the Emperor's appeal was based.

A telling index of the extraordinary nature of this juncture in European history is the fact that the Berry medallions for the first time single out Constantine and Heraclius and bring them together as a pair¹⁹. Clearly the motive was to allude to the shared heritage of the eastern and western empires through the two emperors most closely associated with the Cross as the emblem of Christian hegemony. The Cross is the theme that joins the two medallions, and this common denominator is given a specifically devotional base through the texts from St. Paul and the psalms that together introduce the liturgies of the church's two great feasts in honor of the Cross, the Invention and the Exaltation. The reference to the introit begins on the reverse of the Constantine

medallion (MIHI ABSIT GLORIARI NISI IN CRUCE DOMINI NOSTRI JHESU CHRISTI) and concludes on the obverse of that of Heraclius (ILLUMINA VULTUM TUUM DEUS)²⁰. Constantine and Heraclius are themselves related through the two feasts since their stories are told in the Golden Legend, respectively on May 3 (Invention) and September 14 (Exaltation). The inspiration of the sign of the Cross is implicit on both obverses: the Cross appearing in the inscription immediately above the head of Constantine alludes to his famous vision, and the rays of light toward which Heraclius lifts his eyes refer to the equivalent vision of the cross which Heraclius was supposed to have had before his battle with Chosroes²¹. Finally, the Cross is also the focus of the scenes depicted on both reverses, which emphasize the deference of the imperial victors to its triumph²².

The sacred, imperial history embodied in the Duke's medallion series culminates in this pair, but the underlying theme of the whole program is to be found among the numerous holy relics the Duke acquired from Constantinople, one of which one is particularly relevant here. Among the gifts brought to the Duke by the Emperor Manuel II on his visit to Paris was a relic of the True Cross itself, the very emblem of the divine power vested in the secular defenders of the faith²³.

The inventories of the Duke show that the medallions were bought from Florentine merchants living in France and they have sometimes been thought to be Italian in origin²⁴. The Duke owned one of the medals of Francesco da Carrara that certainly prefigured those of Constantine and Heraclius²⁵. In certain respects, moreover, the ideology embodied in the medallions did indeed have its closest precedent in Florence. In the last decades of the fourteenth century Agnolo Gaddi had for the first time isolated the two feasts in painted narratives on the lateral walls of the chancel of the Franciscan church of Santa Croce – the history of the Cross through its rediscovery by Helena on one side, the story of Heraclius on the other – some years after the story of Constantine had been depicted in a nearby chapel as part of a cycle of the life of Pope Sylvester²⁶. The Franciscans, through their founder, were especially devoted to the Cross and their missionaries had been given custody of the sacred places of the Holy Land, including the sites of the Crucifixion and the finding of the True Cross in the church of the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem²⁷. Quite possibly the Santa Croce frescos already reflect the dream of a recuperation of the Holy Land and a reunification of the church under the Latin cross, a dream perhaps rekindled by the visit – the first by a Byzantine emperor since Constantine seven centuries before – of Manuel II's own father, John V Paleologus, to Rome and the promulgation of his submission to the Pope in 1369–70²⁸. References to such Italian precedents is wholly in keeping with the strong Italianate component of much of the art produced for the Duke²⁹.

The medallions take a significant further step, however, in concentrating specifically and exclusively on the two emperors, and encapsulating them in a medallion form and sequence that deliberately evokes the imperial commemorative tradition in a Christian mode. These two innovations were surely interrelated and must have been motivated by the conflations – Constantine–Charles VI, Heraclius–Manuel II – implicit in Manuel's appeal as well as the link between west and east that his visit was intended to achieve. This new conceptual focus and its antiquarian and historicizing format are particularly suggestive if the medallions were actually made in Paris, as is now com-

monly agreed, partly for stylistic reasons, but mainly because of the intimate connections between them and the works of the Limbourg brothers, the Duke's favorite book illuminators³⁰. In the Belles Heures the feast of the Exaltation is given no less than three full-page miniatures, including two illustrating the episode of Heraclius entering Jerusalem. One of these (Fig. 6) is virtually a duplicate of the scene as depicted on the reverse of the Heraclius medallion, which includes at the top – incongruously but no doubt significantly – a row of lamps that recurs in the illustration of the Adoration of the Cross (Fig. 7)³¹; in the latter, the same figure appears, differently dressed and without crown but wearing a Byzantine-looking hat, kneeling before the bejeweled cross. The equestrian figure of Constantine appears in the miniature of the Très Riches Heures representing the Meeting of the Magi (Fig. 8); with the buildings of Paris substituting for those of Jerusalem in the background, this scene conspicuously refers to the actual occasion when Charles VI rode out of Paris to meet the visiting emperor.

It is usually assumed that the medallions were the models for the miniatures, which date from the second decade of the century. However, a peculiar detail of the Constantine figure rules out this assumption. The rider does not hold reins from the bit but a line attached to a ring at the horse's chest, to which the bridle is also connected. The purpose of the arrangement is to give the rider a grip while the animal is led by a squire, as shown in the Magi miniature. The only reasonable explanation is that both works are based on a common source, which the Limbourgs transferred to their modern re-enactment of the gathering of the Magi, and from which the goldsmith extracted the horseman alone to create his quasi-evocation of the classical equestrian medal. The Limbourgs may themselves have witnessed and recorded in a drawing the magnificent encounter between Charles VI and Manuel II on June 3, 1400³².

The extraction of the horse and rider from the processional context created an image that was anomalous in another sense when seen as an isolated equestrian monument. The animal is shown with both legs on one side raised, in the pacing gait familiar from medieval tombs and seals (Fig. 10)³³. Uccello adopted the same type three decades later for his fictive monument to Sir John Hawkwood (Fig. 9), for which he was roundly criticized by Vasari. Vasari maintained that the animal could not stand in this unstable position and concluded that Uccello must have been a bad horseman not to know better³⁴. Pirro Ligorio made the same point about a relief on an ancient Roman altar, in which the horse is being led by a footman – a motif strikingly like that in the Meeting of the Magi miniature (Fig. 11)³⁵. I strongly suspect that, whatever it represented, the common prototype of both the miniature and the medallion must have reflected an ancient composition of this sort, which also occurs frequently in depictions of the imperial *adventus*, or triumphal entry, on Roman coins and medals³⁶. This hypothesis, if true, reveals another particular in which the medallion assimilates antiquity to the medieval tradition in order to invoke the ancient imperial sanction for the common defense of Christianity, which the modern Emperor's visit to Europe was intended to promote. In Paris such classical precedents were assimilated to a new form, from which Pisanello in turn developed his own ideas.

Pisanello's medal of John Paleologus recreated the ancient medal in spirit as well as form: it is cast, not struck, in one piece, rather than two, with a *contemporary* por-

trait on the obverse and an equestrian scene on the reverse. Pisanello's interest in the art of the Limbourgs is well-known³⁷. The important point here is that in this crucial instance of the Renaissance recuperation of antiquity and the individual, classical elements as well as naturalism are drawn from the Northern predecessor, and carried a step further³⁸.

Attention seems not to have been focused on the equally striking fact that Pisanello's invention was motivated by a situation and theme almost precisely analogous to those which underlay the creation of the Constantine and Heraclius medals³⁹. The occasion was a visit made by Manuel's son to Italy, which he undertook for precisely the same reason, a desperate attempt to obtain assistance in defending the eastern Christian empire from the invading Turks. As before, the call was for a modern crusade, not to recover the Holy Land, but to ward off the infidel from Constantinople, the last remaining outpost of Christianity in the eastern Mediterranean, and the last remnant of the ancient Roman empire. The explicit purpose of the emperor's visit, this time to Italy, notably Ferrara and Florence, was to participate in a council called by Pope Eugenius IV to heal the schism that had divided Christianity for a millennium and effect a reunification of the eastern and western Christian churches. The council was ostensibly successful and the reunification was promulgated in Florence on July 6, 1439, with the Emperor recognizing the primary authority of the Pope⁴⁰. It is significant that John Paleologus is not shown crowned and dressed in the imperial robes, as were both Constantine and Heraclius on the Berry medallions; instead, he wears the distinctive hat of the Byzantine Emperor, variously styled «alla greca» or «alla grecanica»⁴¹. On the reverse he is dressed in military armor, and he does not ride, carrying the Cross, in his imperial triumphal wagon, but is shown on horseback, passing through a barren, rock-strewn landscape toward a cross-topped monument which he approaches with his hands pressed together in humble devotion. The emperor thus appears as the protagonist of an allegorical pilgrimage in search of the True Cross. It might be said that Pisanello's conceit combined the humility enjoined on the emperor by the medallion of Constantine, «Far be it from me to glory in anything but the cross», with the divine inspiration illustrated by that of Heraclius. In spirit, John Paleologus's journey had the same goal as Constantine on his ambling stallion and Heraclius in his splendid car. Before, the theme was the community of purpose of the imperial power, here it was the unity of the churches.

Crucial to an understanding of Pisanello's debt to the Berry medals is the fact that it, too, was one of a pair⁴². Paolo Giovio, in a letter quoted by Vasari, reported that he owned a variant, now lost, of the Paleologus medal that showed on the reverse the Cross held aloft by two hands representing the Greek and Latin churches. This, clearly, was the ultimate goal, the Holy Grail of the emperor's journey, so that the two medals complemented one another in much the same way as had the Berry medals. It can scarcely be coincidental that Cardinal Bessarion, the Greek representative to the Council who became a zealous promoter of reunion, adopted the latter motif as his personal emblem (Fig. 12), presumably when Pope Eugenius named him Cardinal in September 1439⁴³. The circumstances suggest that Bessarion may have been the promoter of the Pisanello medals, as well, and it may also not be coincidental that pre-

cisely during the period following the council the Franciscan order, of which Bessarion became Cardinal Protector in 1458, adopted a very similar device showing the crossed arms of Christ and St. Francis with a cross between⁴⁴. One may even discern the pervasive role of the »Franciscan connection« in a seal of the order that shows the device surrounded by the text from St. Paul, *ABSIT GLORIARI NISI IN CRUCE* (Fig. 13)⁴⁵, familiar from the reverse of the Constantine medal and the introits of the feasts of the invention and exaltation of the Cross; the same text figures prominently in the liturgies, including the introits, of the two great Franciscan feasts, that of Francis himself and that of the stigmata⁴⁶.

Pisanello clearly understood the implications of both the form and the content of the Berry medals. Through them, he invoked antiquity, not as an end in itself but to vivify and illuminate the present.

Appendix

St. Bonaventure's Coat of Arms

The process described here involving Bessarion and the Council of Florence may in turn be an extraordinarily sophisticated reprise of the events associated with the Second Council of Lyons convened by Gregory X in 1274, which included representatives of the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Paleologus. The earlier council also focused on the crusade, the accession by the Greeks to the Latin demands, and the reunion of the churches, which was formally decreed, though it proved short-lived. A major protagonist was the General of the Franciscan order, St. Bonaventure, whom Pope Gregory had named cardinal the year before, in anticipation of his participation in the Council. A singular tradition has it that when Bonaventure received the cardinalcy, instead of adopting his family arms for his escutcheon, as was usual, he devised a design consisting of two hands nailed together, evidently symbolic not only of the Franciscan vows and identification with the Stigmata and the Passion, but also of the reunion of the churches. I have so far been able to trace the story of Bonaventure's coat of arms back to, but no further than the Netherlandish Franciscan devotional book *Den Wijn-gaert van Sinte Franciscus*, Antwerp 1518⁴⁷. The episode was reported from this source in a note to the 1613 edition of Pietro Galesino's biography of Bonaventure by Henricus Sedulius, who adds that Bonaventure's device was the origin of the emblem to the Franciscan order itself⁴⁸. I suspect Bessarion knew and deliberately emulated Bonaventure's council role and heraldic representation of its religious and political significance.

The earliest instance I have found of Bonaventure's coat of arms is in a late fifteenth century Netherlandish painting of the saint in the Museo Francese in Rome, and it accompanies the figure of Bonaventure in the concluding plate showing the celebrated early members of the order in Philip Galle's 1587 engraved life of St. Francis, dedicated by Sedulius⁴⁹.

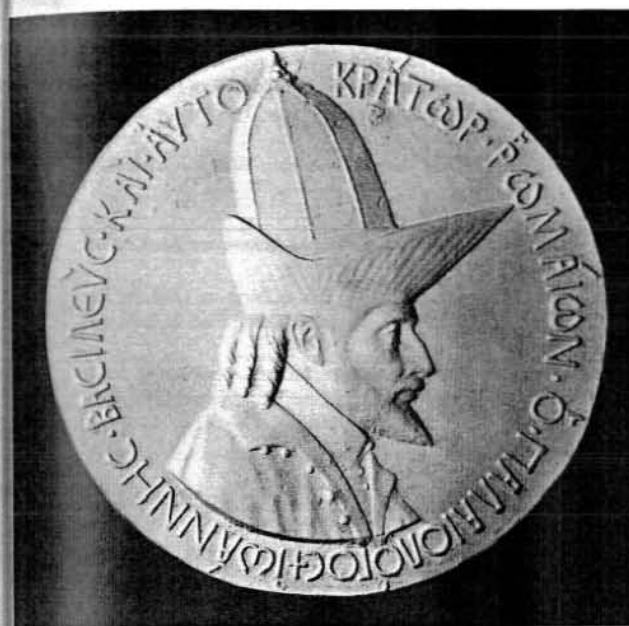
Endnotes

- 1 For a full discussion of Master Gusmin, see Richard KRAUTHEIMER, with the collaboration of Trude KRAUTHEIMER-HESS, Lorenzo Ghiberti, Princeton 1970, pp. 62–67.
- 2 On this tradition, see Irving LAVIN, An Observation of »Medievalism« in Early Sixteenth Century Style, in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 50, 1957, pp. 113–118, and the literature cited there.
- 3 See Jacob BURCKHARDT's seminal essay, »Skulptur der Renaissance« in the Gesamtausgabe, 14 vols., Stuttgart, etc., 1929–34, vol. XIII, pp. 302 ff.
- 4 The fundamental modern study is that of Roberto WEISS, *Pisanello's Medallion of the Emperor John VIII Palaeologus*, Oxford 1966; thereafter Giovanna DE LORENZI, *Medaglie di Pisanello e della sua cerchia*, Florence 1983, pp. 9–13, and J. G. POLLARD, *Italian Renaissance Medals in the Museo Nazionale di Bargello*, I. 1400–1530, Florence 1984, pp. 30–32. My view here essentially follows that of Roberto WEISS, *Le origini franco-bizantine della medaglia italiana del Rinascimento*, in: Agostino PERTUSI, ed., *Venezia e l'oriente fra tardo medioevo e Rinascimento*, Venice 1966, pp. 339–350, who emphasized the French origin of the Constantine and Heraclius medals and their importance for Pisanello; my argument and interpretation differ substantially from Weiss's, however.
- 5 The classic study of the early medals is that by Julius von SCHLOSSER, *Die ältesten Medaillen und die Antike*, in: *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 18, 1897, pp. 64–108; they were catalogued by George Francis HILL, *A Corpus of Italian Medals of the Renaissance before Cellini*, 2 vols., London 1930, pp. 3–4; DE LORENZI (see n. 4), p. 9; POLLARD (see n. 4), p. 27f.
- 6 Roberto WEISS, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity*, Oxford 1969, pp. 22–24, 37f.
- 7 The most recent study of the medals is that by S. K. SCHER, in: Michele D. MARINCOLA, Anne L. POULET and Stephen K. SCHER, *Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque Medals from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, in: *The Medal*, No. 9, 1986, pp. 79–105, especially pp. 81–87; full bibliography will be found in: *Ex aere solido. Bronzen von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, exhib. cat., Berlin 1983, pp. 90–96. The original gold exemplars are lost; all extant versions are copies.
- 8 See Jules GUIFFREY, *Inventaires de Jean Duc de Berry (1401–1416)*, 2 vols., Paris 1894–96, vol. I, p. 72f., nos. 199, 200.
- 9 WEISS, *Le origini* (see n. 4), p. 346f., is responsible for this important insight concerning the Byzantine titular formulas in Latin and Greek.
- 10 The introit is as follows: Gal. 6.14 *Nos autem gloriari oportet in Cruce Domini nostri Jesu Christi: in quo est salus, vita, et resurrectio nostra: per quem salvati, et liberati sumus. Ps. 66.2 Deus misereatur nostri, et benedicat nobis: illuminet vultum suum super nos, et misereatur nostri* (Invention of the Cross, in: *Missale Romanum*, Boston, etc., 1944, p. 565; Exaltation, in: *ibid.*, p. 729; that the same text is used for both feasts was noted by Millard MEISS, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Limbours and their Contemporaries*, New York 1974, p. 455, n. 252). For a Franciscan use of Gal. 6.14 see below.
- 11 For the identification of the figures see Mark JONES, *The First Cast Medals and the Limbours*. The Iconography and Attribution of the Constantine and Heraclius Medals, in: *Art History* 2, 1979, pp. 35–44, especially p. 37.
- 12 See n. 10 above.
- 13 As noted by JONES, *The First* (see n. 11), p. 41.
- 14 The passage has a long history in the theme of Christ as imperial victor (cf., concerning the mosaic in the Archbishop's Palace at Ravenna, Friedrich Wilhelm DEICHMANN, *Ravenna. Hauptstadt des spätantiken Abendlandes. Kommentar*, 1. Teil, Wiesbaden 1974, p. 57f.).
- 15 *The Hours of the Divine Office in English and Latin*, 3 vols., Collegeville, Minn. 1964, vol. III, pp. 1521–1524.
- 16 On the Duke's patronage and his library see Millard MEISS, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Late Fourteenth Century and the Patronage of the Duke*, London 1967, pp. 36–67, 287–318; on the medals discussed here, see pp. 53–58.
- 17 See SCHLOSSER (n. 5), p. 81f.; Philippe VERDIER, *A Medallion of the »Ara Coeli« and the Netherlandish*

- Enamels of the Fifteenth Century, in: *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 24, 1961, pp. 9–37, especially p. 21.
- 18 On the Emperor's visit, see John W. BARKER, *Manuel Palaeologus (1391–1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship*, New Brunswick, NJ 1969, pp. 165–199; Kenneth M. SETTON, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)*, 2 vols., Philadelphia 1976–78, vol. I, pp. 371–376.
 - 19 As noted by Marilyn Aronberg LAVIN, *The Place of Narrative. Mural Decoration in Italian Churches, 431–1600*, Chicago/London 1990, p. 113.
 - 20 For the complete text see n. 10 above.
 - 21 Heraclius's dream was shown in Gaddi's frescos at Santa Croce, mentioned below; see M.A. LAVIN (n. 19), p. 106, 111f.
 - 22 Jules GUIFFREY, *Médailles de Constantin et d'Héraclius acquises par Jean, Duc de Berry en 1402*, in: *Revue numismatique*, ser. 3, 8, 1890, pp. 87–116, especially p. 105, notes that the passage from St. Paul was the motto of the defenders of the Holy Sepulcher.
 - 23 The relics and other mementos from Constantinople are listed in GUIFFREY, *Inventaires* (see n. 8), vol. I, p. 46 no. 101, 55 no. 133; vol. II, p. 35 no. 214 (True Cross), 40 no. 274, 262 no. 791, 285 no. 1263, 332, 334.
 - 24 For a survey of attributions, see JONES, *The First* (n. 11), p. 36.
 - 25 GUIFFREY, *Inventaires* (see n. 8), vol. I, p. 153 no. 560.
 - 26 For a full discussion and appreciation of the importance of these frescos in the context of the legend of the True Cross, see Marilyn Aronberg LAVIN (n. 19), pp. 99–113.
 - 27 See Eve BORSOOK, *The Mural Painters of Tuscany*, Oxford 1980, p. 93, 100 n. 46, 101 nn. 74, 86; M.A. LAVIN (n. 19), p. 113, 325 n. 78.
 - 28 See BARKER (n. 18), pp. 9–14; SETTON (n. 18), vol. I, pp. 312–315.
 - 29 See the discussion of the North-South relationship in MEISS, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Limbourgs* (n. 10), pp. 240–251.
 - 30 The most recent attributions have been to the Limbourg brothers or to the Duke's court painter Michel Saulmon; cf. JONES, *The First* (see n. 11), p. 39; Ex aere solido (see n. 7), p. 94; SCHER in: *Marincola et al.* (see n. 7), p. 83. The relationships between the medals and the Limbourg miniatures have been most thoroughly discussed by VERDIER (see n. 17); MEISS, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Late Fourteenth Century* (see n. 16), p. 53ff., 304f., and MEISS, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Limbourgs* (see n. 10), p. 64f., 130ff.; JONES, *The First* (see n. 11).
 - 31 MEISS (*French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Limbourgs*, see n. 10, p. 131) suggests that the lamps continue the idea of divine illumination that inspires the obverse of the medal. The emperor in his wagon also reappears as the chariot of Apollo in the calendar miniatures of the Très Riches Heures, recalling the name that appears in the field of the obverse of the Heraclius medal (as noted by MEISS and others, see *ibid.*, p. 185).
 - 32 On the meeting, see BARKER (n. 18), p. 173f., 397. The observation concerning the horsemen's harnesses and the assumption of a common source are due to JONES, *The First* (n. 11). Jones attributes the medals to the Limbourgs themselves, who were trained as goldsmiths; they were in Paris at the time of Manuel II's visit, having been ransomed from captivity in Brussels by the Duke on May 2, 1400 (MEISS, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Limbourgs*, see n. 10, p. 67). – The suggestion of a common source in a drawing of the procession was made by JONES, *The First* (see n. 11), p. 39. Similar reasoning suggests that the lights depicted on the obverse of the Heraclius medal were transferred from a prototype of the Adoration of the Cross (*ibid.*).
 - 33 See Walter LIETKE, *The Royal Horse and Rider. Painting, Sculpture, and Horsemanship 1500–1800*, n.p. 1989, pp. 88–89. The example illustrated is the Great Seal of Henry III (1216–72), Alfred Benjamin WYON, *The Great Seals of England*, London 1887, p. 21, No. 42, pl. VI.
 - 34 «e Paulo non avesse fatto che quel cavallo muove le gambe da una banda sola, il che naturalmente i cavalli non fanno, perchè cascherebbono (il che forse gli avvenne, perchè non era avvezzo a cavalcare, nè pratico con cavalli, come con gli altri animali), sarebbe questa opera perfettissima» (Giorgio VASARI, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori ed architettori*, ed. G. MILANESI, 9 vols., Florence 1906, vol. II, p. 212).
 - 35 «Notate l'errore di cui sculpi questo cavallo che non hauea studiato il caminar degli animali; il quale muoue le gambe tutte due da un lato cosa contra la natura,» Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS XIII. B. 8., p. 301, with a drawing of the altar, which is now in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore; David R. COFFIN, *Pirro Ligorio on the Nobility of the Arts*, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 27, 1964, pp. 191–210, especially p. 196; Hanns GABELMANN, *Die ritterliche Trabea*, in: *Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts* 92, 1977, pp. 322–381, especially p. 343, 370, no. 5. Coffin also refers to the following passage in another manuscript of Ligorio: «Moite volte hanno non solamente errato in si fatte historie: ma nella naturalita istessa hanno falsato. Hanno fatto il caualllo che camina, facendole muouere li piedi duoi destri et i duoi sinistri a'un tempo da una banda, non sapendo chel caualllo, muoue per diametro il passo, mouendo il sinistro dauante, muoue ad un tempo il destro di dietro, et muouendo il destro dauante col sinistro di dietro quello accompagna, et così si sostiene impiedi, altrimenti il caualllo cadarebbe.» Turin, Archivio di Stato, MS J. a. II. 15, vol. XXIX, fol. 19v. – The same critique was made by a modern writer of the ambling horse of Pisanello's John Paleologus medal (Vladimir JUREN, *A propos de la médaille de Jean VIII Paléologue par Pisanello*, in: *Revue numismatique* 15, 1973, pp. 219–225, especially p. 222; on the horse and its gait, see George Francis HILL, *Pisanello*, London/New York 1905, p. 108).
 - 36 See the relevant examples in Richard BRILLIANT, *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art*, New Haven, Conn. 1963. This relationship parallels the reference to Roman wagons in the emperor's vehicle on the reverse of the Heraclius medallion (see MEISS, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry. The Limbourgs* [n. 10], p. 132).
 - 37 See Otto PACHT, *The Limbourgs and Pisanello*, in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 62, 1963, pp. 109–122.
 - 38 In an important recent study Rudolf PRIMESBERGER (Zu Jan van Eycks Diptychon der Sammlung Thyssen-Bornemisza, in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 60, 1991, pp. 459–489) has related some of the innovative aspects of the art of Jan Van Eyck to classical sources.
 - 39 The point has been noted by Mark JONES, *The Art of the Medal*, London 1979, p. 14.
 - 40 The event was commemorated with a medal struck that year showing Eugenius enthroned on the obverse, and on the reverse the Emperor and the Armenian patriarch kneeling before a figure of St. Peter; HILL, *Corpus* (see n. 5), p. 5, no. 13.
 - 41 The terms were used by Vespasiano da Bisticci and Paolo Giovio (HILL, *Pisanello*, see n. 35, p. 107f.).
 - 42 See the observations by Carlo GINZBURG, *The Enigma of Piero. Piero della Francesca. The Baptism. The Arezzo Cycle. The Flagellation*, London 1985, p. 44, 50 n. 81.
 - 43 JUREN (see n. 35), p. 221, noted the identity of the Pisanello reverse with Bessarion's arms. See GINZBURG (n. 42), p. 44; on our Fig. 12 see Roberto WEISS, *Two unnoticed 'Portraits' of Cardinal Bessarion*, in: *Italian Studies* 22, 1967, pp. 1–5, and Giordana MARIANI CANOVA, *Una illustre serie liturgica ricostruita: I corali del Bessarione già all'Annunziata di Cesena*, in: *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte* 11, 1978, pp. 7–20.
 - 44 Ludwig MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion als Theologe, Humanist und Staatsmann. Darstellung*, Paderborn 1967, p. 284; L. BRACALONI, *Lo stemma francescano nell'arte*, in: *Studi francescani* 7, 1921, pp. 221–226.
 - 45 Giacomo C. BASCAPE, *Sigillografia. Il sigillo nella diplomazia, nel diritto, nella storia, nell'arte*, 2 vols., Milan 1969–78, vol. II, p. 207 ff., cf. pl. XLIV, no. 3.
 - 46 *Missale* (see n. 10), p. 733f., 750f.
 - 47 On this work see Benjamin de TROEYER, *Bio-bibliografia francisca neerlandica saeculi XVI*, 2 vols., Nieuwkoop 1969–70, vol. I, pp. 42–46, vol. II, pp. 401–403. I quote the relevant passage (fol. 189vb–190ra) *in extenso*: «Het is een manier int hof van Romen, dat een yegelijc Cardinael een wapen moet vueren, met den Cardinaels hoet daer bouen, tot sijnder kennissen ende eeren. Ende waert sake dat si van gheender afcomst en waren, die wapenen plegen te vueren, So sal hem die paus een wapen oordineren oft confirmeren, die hem belieft te hebben. Sinte Bonaventura aldus Cardinael ghemaect, die de werelt met sijnder ydelheyt versmaet hadde, en woude niet weder op heffen, dat hi onder sijn voeten ghetreden hadde. Ende al was hi van edelen personen ende maghen gheboren, hij en woude nochtans die weerlike edelheyt niet na volghen. Ende daerom, om dat hi te vreemder vander werelt soude bliven Ende nyemant hem verblijden soude dat sijn gheslachts wapen onder die cardinalen soude hanghen, so heeft hi een

bijzonder wapen gheoordineert, sinen staet voeghende. Ende heeft doen maken eenen blauwen schild, ende dar in ons heeren hant, met sinte Franciscus hande vast in trouwen op malkanderen genaghelt. Ende dat is des minderbroeders wapen, dwelc is in een blau velt, want alle haer ghedachten, wercken ende oeffeninghen sulle si nae den hemel verheffen; ende dencken op der trouwen die si gode ende alle sijne heylighen in haerder professien gheloeft hebben; ende dese handen sijn tsamen ghenagelt want sy hier aff nemmermeer vry ende los en moghen worden etc. Die paus confirmeerde hem dese salige wapen de welc hi in sinen zeghel ende al omme daert van node was dede drucken. Ende noch staet dese wapen aen sijn beelt gheschildert huden op den dach in alle plaetsen, daer syn figuer staet, also di paus Sixtus ordineerde.»

- 48 Henricus SEDULIUS, *Historia seraphica vitae B.mi P.Francisci Assisiatis, illustriumq. virorum et feminarum qui ex tribus eius ordinibus relati sunt inter sanctos*, Antwerp 1613, p.293: «Addit etiam [i.e., *Den Wijngaert*], tum Sanctum Bonaventuram insignia sibi fecisse, non nobilis sua gentis usurpasse, sed Christi manum Divi Francisci manui clavo confixam: quo significare voluit, professionis nostrae sponsonem nulla ratione solvendam, sed perpetuo ratam fixamque servandam: unde hac deinceps Ordini Seraphici signa habentur.»
- 49 On the former, Pater GERLACH, et al., *Il museo francescano. Catalogo*, Rome 1973, pp.22, No.33; on the latter, Servus GIEBEN, *Philip Galle's Engravings Illustrating the Life of Francis of Assisi*, Rome 1977 (=Collectanea Franciscana, XLVI, 1976, pp.241–307), cf. pl.III/20. In all these matters concerning the heraldry of Bessarion, St.Bonaventure and the Franciscan order, I am indepted for much help and kindness to Father Gieben, ofmcap., Director of the Museo Francescano.



1 Pisanello, medal of John VIII Paleologus, 1438–39



2 Medal of Francesco I da Carrara, 1390



3 Marco da Sesto, Galba, 1393





4 Medal of Constantine, 1402



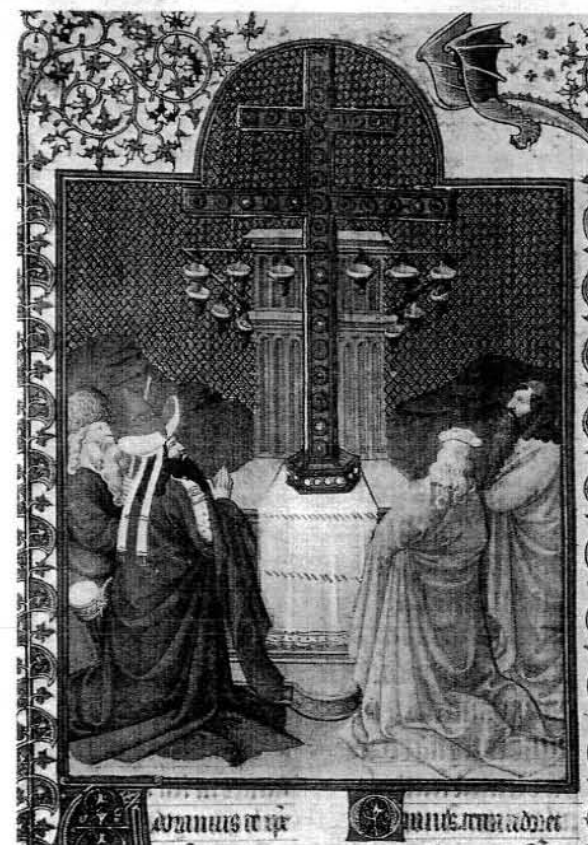
6 The Limbourg Brothers, Heraclius with the True Cross at the Gate of Jerusalem, ca. 1408. Belles Heures of the Duc de Berry, fol. 156. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters



5 Medal of Heraclius, 1402



7 The Limbourg Brothers, Adoration of the Cross, ca. 1408. Belles Heures of the Duc de Berry, fol. 157. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters





8 The Limbourg Brothers, The Meeting of the Magi, ca. 1411–16. Très Riches Heures, fol. 51v. Chantilly, Musée Condé



9 Uccello, Sir John Hawkwood. Florence, Cathedral

10 Seal of Henry III (1216–72)

11 Funerary altar of M. Iunius Rufus. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery

12 Arms of Cardinal Bessarion. MS Corale 2, fol. 1r. Cesena, Biblioteca Malatestiana

13 Seal of the Franciscan order with legends «absit gloriari nisi in cruce» and «omnia in omnis» (after Bascapé 1969–78, see n. 45, II, pl. XIV, no. 3)



