

COINAGE AND PAPAL POLICY IN UMBRIA IN THE EARLY 15TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

During the first decades of the 15th century the revival of the temporal power of the pope over the territories of the ancient estate of Saint Peter proved to be a long and complex process and the coinage, with its symbolic meanings and uses, was indeed a potentially efficient means of political consolidation¹.

KEY WORDS

Papal States, Coinage, Monetary history.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Imperia Pontificia, Nummi, Historia nummorum.

1. This paper has been translated by Judith Turnbull.



Within the wide historical debate about the nature and forms of the temporal power of late medieval pontiffs² there is no doubt that immediately after the conclusion of the Council of Constance (1418) held in the presence of the newly elected Pope Martin V Colonna there opened the difficult question of restoring the authority of Rome over the landed property of the Church. There is a rich historical literature on this subject, though here we are not going to discuss whether decisions were taken with the intention of moving towards a strongly centralised monarchy³ as early as the beginning of the 15th century or rather pragmatic logic favoured a policy of continuous compromises in order to adapt to the situations that actually existed and therefore did not explicitly appear, given the numerous agreements made with a galaxy of forces, to introduce radical changes into the existing system⁴.

Even with certain subtle distinctions and evaluations made of the effectiveness of the results achieved, it is generally agreed that Pope Colonna took decisive action to strengthen the presence of the Apostolic Camera in the finance and administration of the local communities⁵. Firstly, Rome began to take a more direct part in the appointment of communal officials and the growing presence of a number of marginal figures, such as governors, commissars, administrators, vicars, even though they did not always have a well defined institutional role, obliged different local power groups to intensify their relations with the central seat of authority⁶. In addition, the Holy See extended its decisional prerogatives, even into military matters where the choice of castellans and the direct control of the fortresses⁷ became key factors in enabling the papacy to provide an effective defence of the territory against the expansionary ambitions of the other powers in the peninsula.

2. Carocci, Sandro. "Governo papale e città nello Stato della Chiesa. Ricerche sul Quattrocento", *Principi e città alla fine del Medioevo*, Sergio Gensini, ed. Pisa: Pacini, 1996: 151-224.

3. Prodi, Paolo. *Il sovrano pontefice. Un corpo e due anime: la monarchia papale nella prima età moderna*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1982.

4. A general bibliography on the events connected with the configuration of Italian states in the early modern era include: Chittolini, Giorgio; Molho, Anthony; Schiera, Pierangelo. *Processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed età moderna*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994; Chittolini, Giorgio. "Introduzione", *La crisi degli ordinamenti comunali e le origini dello stato del Rinascimento*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979: 7-50; Chittolini, Giorgio. *La formazione dello Stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado. Secoli XIV e XV*. Turin: G. Einaudi, 1979; Fasano, Elena. "Gli stati dell'Italia centro-settentrionale tra Quattro e Cinquecento: continuità e trasformazione". *Società e storia*, 6 (1983): 617-639; Fasano, Elena. "État moderne et anciens états italiens: éléments d'histoire comparée". *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 45 (1998): 15-41.

5. Partner, Peter. "La Camera apostolica come organo centrale delle finanze pontificie", *Alessandro VI e lo Stato della chiesa*, Carla Frova, Maria Grazia Nico, eds. Rome: Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, Direzione generale per gli archivi, 2003: 27-36.

6. Lombardi, Giuseppe. "I rapporti con Roma e con il governatore del Patrimonio", *Storia a confronto. Le riformanze dei comuni della Tuscia alla metà del Quattrocento*. Rome: Roma nel Rinascimento, 1995: 139-185; Partner, Peter. "Comuni e vicariati nello Stato pontificio al tempo di Martino V", *La crisi degli ordinamenti comunali e le origini dello stato del Rinascimento*, Giorgio Chittolini, ed. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979: 227-261; Gardi, Andrea. "Gli 'ufficiali' nello Stato pontificio del Quattrocento". *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, 4/1 (1997): 225-291.

7. Nico, Maria Grazia, ed. *Rocche e fortificazioni nello Stato della chiesa*. Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2004.



Another important area to be subjected successfully to the centralising tendency of the Camera was the fiscal-financial sector⁸, which underwent a gradual process involving a number of procedures, collectively known as “the confiscation of communal finances”⁹. As the Schism had ended with the loss of numerous sources of spiritual income for the papacy, the temporal consolidation of the Papal States at the beginning of the 15th century required a substantial financial effort that was born largely by the levying of different kinds of census and taxes, many of which had fallen into disuse, but above all by redirecting the payment of taxes and dues that in the past had been the prerogative of the local magistrates¹⁰ to a state administrative body so that a free-flowing circulation of monetary resources was guaranteed between the centre and the periphery¹¹. It is not surprising therefore that, from the early years of the pontificate of Martin V, the provincial treasuries became one of the main pillars on which the strengthening of the administration rested in the initial phases, as can be seen in the almost complete series of accounting books¹².

The vast amount of data to be found in the registers of revenue and expenditure recorded annually by financial officials in the provinces of the Papal States provide a very rich area of research and excellent reading¹³, but also enable us to investigate a range of subjects that can be followed up separately in microanalyses, as for example the different types of contracts signed and the amounts involved, the people engaged under various guises in the fiscal system, the geography of taxation, the items of expenditure and lastly, as we are concerned with questions of accounting, the topic

8. Strangio, Donatella. “La finanza pubblica nella Roma del primo rinascimento. I registri introitus et exitus della Camera Apostolica nei primi anni di pontificato di Eugenio IV (1431-1434)”, *Studi in onore di Ciro Manca*, Donatella Strangio, Ciro Manca, eds. Padua: Casa Editrice Dott. Antonio Milani, 2000: 349-378 and 521-553; de Rita, Rossella. “Tra centralismo e autonomia locali. La tesoreria provinciale della Marca sotto Martino V”, *Studi in onore di Ciro...: 147-164*.

9. Palermo, Luciano. “La finanza pontificia e il banchiere ‘depositario’ nel primo Quattrocento”, *Studi in onore di Ciro...: 349-378*; Palermo, Luciano. “Capitali pubblici e investimenti privati nell’amministrazione finanziaria della città di Roma all’epoca di Martino V”, *Alle origini della nuova Roma. Martini V (1417-1431)*. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1992: 501-535.

10. Lombardo, Maria Luisa. *La Camera Urbis. Premesse per uno studio sull’organizzazione amministrativa della città di Roma durante il pontificato di Martino V*. Rome: Il Centro di ricerca pergamene medievali e protocolli notarili, 1970.

11. Palermo, Luciano. “Banchi privati e finanze pubbliche nella Roma del primo Rinascimento”, *Banchi pubblici, banchi privati e monti di pietà nell’Europa preindustriale. Amministrazione, tecniche operative e ruoli economici. Atti del convegno, Genova, 1-6 ottobre 1990*. Genoa: Società Ligure di Storia Patria: 1991: 435-459; Cassandro, Michele. “I banchieri pontifici nel XV secolo”, *Roma capitale (1447-1527)*, Sergio Gensini, ed. Pisa: Pacini, 1994.

12. On the provinces in the Papal States, see: Zenobi, Bandino G. *Le “ben regolate città”. Modelli politici nel governo delle periferie pontificie in età moderna*. Rome: Bulzoni, 1994: 19-30; Volpi, Roberto. *Le regioni introvabili. Centralizzazione e regionalizzazione dello Stato pontificio*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1983.

13. Caravale, Mario. “Le entrate pontificie”, *Roma capitale...: 74-106*; Caravale, Mario. *La finanza pontificia nel Cinquecento. Le province del Lazio*. Naples: Jovene, 1971; Stumpo, Enrico. “La gestione delle tesorerie provinciali nello Stato della Chiesa fra Cinque e Seicento”, *La Marca e le sue istituzioni al tempo di Sisto V*. Rome: Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali-Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, 1991: 49-62; Pastura, Maria G. “Tesorerie e depositerie”, *La Marca e le sue istituzioni...: 191-199*; Graziani, Ersilia. “Aspetti della fiscalità pontificia nella Marca di Ancona alla fine del Quattrocento”, *Alessandro VI e lo Stato della chiesa...: 203-228*.



I propose here, coinage¹⁴ seen in its double function as a means of payment creating a point of contact between each community or person and state officials engaged in the levying, but also as a political instrument to impose a uniform administration throughout the territory.

The approach adopted here will have to be verified in future research, and therefore in the following pages I will not attempt to reach any conclusions, but rather set myself the easier task of just proposing a question for further reflection. In fact, the objective of this paper is not to establish the real purchasing power of the different currencies in circulation, the relationship between gold and silver, the fluctuation between real and nominal currencies¹⁵ or the coinage actually in circulation in a limited geographical area and period of time¹⁶. Instead, it starts from the hypothesis of whether the work of political revival undertaken by Martin V involved a strict use of the coinage of the dominant power or, following a more flexible approach, the treasurers tried to reconcile the central power's need to have homogeneous accounts, by making comparisons of the exchange rates of the currency in circulation, with the desire of the local powers to continue using their own coinage as a sign, though purely symbolic, of their autonomy. When comparisons were made, the transcription of each figure with the sum received or spent involved a long and meticulous job of equalising the currencies to their exchange value which often fluctuated even in the short term. All this, within the well-defined currency areas¹⁷, however helped to create a framework which the parties concerned could discuss at times peacefully, but at other times in a more discordant manner.

Moving on from these general points to the reasoning based on the information drawn from the archive material, the following are the first considerations to emerge from the early stages of an analysis of the registers of the Treasury in the province of Umbria kept in the Archives of the State of Rome. The period under consideration covers the years 1424 to 1443¹⁸ and the choice derives from a series of factors that make this region of the Papal States particularly interesting:

- The presence of Perugia, a big, strategically positioned, urban centre with a strong communal tradition, which still continued to play an important political

14. Mueller, Reinhold C. "Domanda e offerta di moneta metallica nell'Italia settentrionale durante il Medioevo". *Rivista Italiana di Numismatica*, 97 (1996): 149-166; Cipolla, Carlo M. *La moneta a Firenze nel Cinquecento*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987; Zerbi, Tommaso. *Moneta effettiva e moneta di conto nelle fonti contabili di Storia economica*, Milan: Marzorati, 1955.

15. Classical studies on these types of questions are: Cipolla, Carlo M. *La moneta a Milano nel Quattrocento. Monetazione argentea e svalutazione secolare*. Rome: Istituto italiano di numismatica, 1988; Cipolla, Carlo M. *Studi di storia della moneta. I movimenti dei cambi in Italia dal sec. XIII al XV*. Pavia: A. Garzanti, 1948.

16. Travaini, Lucia. *Monete, mercanti, matematica. Le monete medievali nei trattati di aritmetica e nei libri di mercatura*. Rome: Jouvence, 2003.

17. Travaini, Lucia. "Le aree monetarie italiane alla fine del Medioevo", *Le Italie del tardo medioevo*, Sergio Gensini, ed. Pisa: Pacini, 1990: 361-389.

18. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, bb. 1-5; Fumi, Luigi. *Inventario e spoglio dei registri della tesoreria apostolica di Perugia e Umbria*. Perugia: Unione Tipografica Cooperativa, 1901.



role even though it had lost most of its past economic prosperity by the early 15th century¹⁹.

- The fundamental role played by the dense network of small centres (Assisi, Todi, Spoleto, Orvieto, Foligno, Narni...) as a way of penetrating rural districts.
- Last, but not least, the historical function of the Umbrian region as a natural corridor linking the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian coasts of the peninsula²⁰ and its central position in relation to the surrounding commercial areas, but also as a military frontier and frequent battlefield in the dynamic political unrest of the first half of the 15th century.

The question is whether there is any sense in observing this complex scenario from the point of view of the coinage used by provincial treasurers. This is in fact the challenge I have set myself.

From the last decades of the 14th century onwards Perugia, which was considered crucial to the control of the central regions, became the cause of an armed confrontation between Milan and Florence. In January 1400 the Commune first passed into the hands of Gian Galeazzo Visconti²¹, but then in 1408 Ladislao of Durazzo, an ally of Florence, had his condottiere Braccio da Montone²² occupy the city. Montone knew how to find the right allies and succeeded in consolidating his power thanks to a successful mediation of the interests of nobles and merchants²³. Therefore the restoration of papal authority over Umbria undertaken by Martin V immediately after his coronation was not going to be a simple task²⁴. The strategy he adopted had been followed in many other circumstances: agreements were signed with the lords in order to play for time. On February 26 1420 Braccio da Montone restored the cities of Orvieto, Narni and Orte, the areas occupied in the Tiber Valley and the Duchy of Spoleto to the Church in exchange for a pardon and the vicariate

19. Grohmann, Alberto. *Città e territorio tra Medioevo ed Età moderna (Perugia secc. XIII-XVI)*, 2 vols. Perugia: Volumnia, 1981.

20. Grohmann, Alberto. "Aperture e inclinazioni verso l'esterno: le direttrici di transito e di commercio", *Orientamenti di una regione attraverso i secoli. Atti del Decimo Convegno di Studi Umbri. Gubbio, 23-26 maggio 1976*. Perugia: Facoltà di lettere e filosofia dell'Università degli studi di Perugia, 1978: 55-95; Grohmann, Alberto. "Caratteri ed equilibri tra centralità e marginalità", *Storia d'Italia. Le regioni dall'Unità a oggi. L'Umbria*, Renato Covino, Giampaolo Gallo, eds. Turin: Einaudi, 1989: 5-72.

21. Goldbrunner, Hermann M. "I rapporti tra Perugia e Milano alla fine del Trecento", *Storia e arte in Umbria nell'età comunale*. Perugia: Università de Perugia, 1971: 687-694.

22. Baruti, Maria Vittoria, ed. *Braccio da Montone e i Fortebracci. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi. Montone, 22-25 marzo 1990*. Rome: Centro studi storici, 1993.

23. Caravale, Mario; Caracciolo, Alberto. *Lo Stato pontificio da Martino V a Pio IX*. Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1978: 21-23; Grohmann, Alberto. "Ricchezza e potere a Perugia dall'avvento di Braccio alla Guerra del Sale (1416-1540)". *Annali della Facoltà di scienze politiche dell'Università di Perugia*, 16 (1979-1980): 127-146.

24. Partner, Peter. *The Papal State under Martin V. The Administration and Government of the Temporal Power in the Early Fifteenth Century*. London: British School at Rome, 1958: 171-179; Chiacchella, Rita; Nico, Maria Grazia. "Perugia tra Quattrocento e Cinquecento: un difficile equilibrio", *Una santa, una città. Atti del convegno storico nel V centenario della venuta a Perugia di Colomba da Rieti. Perugia, 10-11-12 novembre 1989*, Giovanna Casagrande, Enrico Menestò, eds. Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, 1991: 13-33.



of Perugia, Todi and Gualdo, but he also promised to pay an annual tribute to the Apostolic Camera and to serve the Pope as condottiere. It certainly amounted to a compromise and could not last for long: indeed, Braccio favoured the Florentine ambitions of hegemony and continued to practise an aggressive military policy against the Papal States and the Kingdom of Naples. After a few years of conflict, on June 2, 1424, near L'Aquila, an army of Papal and Neapolitan troops defeated the condottiere who died a few days later²⁵. After the vicariate, a new period dawned for Perugia and the region of Umbria²⁶ and the consequences of papal power soon began to show as the papacy became more confident and managed its relationship with the lands to be governed in such a way that it could strengthen the power of the central authority.

Immediately after the death of Braccio da Montone the Baglioni and other families of the Perugian oligarchy²⁷ were offered the chance to increase their land possessions in exchange for their loyalty and did nothing to stop the city from returning under the direct control of the Church. Agreements signed in July 1424 gave particular importance to financial arrangements²⁸: the Apostolic Camera, through the provincial treasury that had been reinstated²⁹, secured the levy of a large annual tax calculated at 12,000 florins³⁰ and also took part in the everyday administration of the land³¹, together with the magistrates of the city, the conservatori della moneta (currency registrars) and the massari (tax collectors)³². This laid the foundations for a new network of relations between communal and papal functionaries involved

25. Valentini, Roberto. "Lo stato di Braccio e la guerra aquilana nella politica di Martino V (1421-1424)". *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria*, 52 (1929): 223-379.

26. Partner, Peter. "L'Umbria durante i pontificati di Martino V e Eugenio IV", *Storia e cultura in Umbria nell'età moderna (secoli XV-XVIII)*. Perugia: Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università degli Studi di Perugia, 1972: 89-100; Carocci, Sandro. "Governo papale e città nello Stato della Chiesa...": 164-169; even though it refers to a later period, see also: Zenobi, Bandino G. *Le "ben regolate città". Modelli politici nel governo...*: 137-154.

27. Carocci, Sandro. "Governo papale e città nello Stato della Chiesa...": 210-219; Frascarelli, Francesco. *Nobiltà minore e borghesia a Perugia nel sec. XV: ricerche su Baglioni della Brigida e sui Narducci*. Perugia: Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, 1973; Black, Christopher F. "The Baglioni as Tyrants of Perugia, 1488-1540". *The English Historical Review*, 85 (1970): 245-281; Regni, Claudio. "Le istituzioni comunali a Perugia al tempo di Alessandro VI", *Alessandro VI e lo Stato della chiesa...*: 229-254. For other areas of the Papal States, see also: Zenobi, Bandino G. *Ceti e potere nella Marca pontificia. Formazione e organizzazione della piccola nobiltà fra '500 e '700*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1976.

28. Regni, Claudio. "L'amministrazione politico-finanziaria del comune di Perugia nei suoi rapporti con la Camera Apostolica", *Ricerche su Perugia tra Due e Quattrocento*. Perugia: Università degli Studi di Perugia, 1981: 161-188.

29. Caravale, Mario; Caracciolo, Alberto. *Lo Stato pontificio da Martino V...*: 36.

30. Later reduced to 8.000 florins by Eugene IV.

31. Black, Christopher F. "Politica e amministrazione a Perugia tra Quattrocento e Cinquecento", *Storia e cultura in Umbria nell'età moderna (secoli XV-XVIII)*. Perugia: Facoltà di lettere e filosofia dell' Università degli Studi di Perugia, 1972: 101-116; Caravale, Mario. "Le entrate pontificie...": 82-84.

32. Segolini, Danilo. "Osservazioni sugli statuti del 1400 dei conservatori della moneta del Comune di Perugia". *Bollettino della Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Umbria*, 44-45 (1947-1948): 155-178; Alfieri, Vittorio. "L'amministrazione economica dell'antico Comune di Perugia". *Bollettino della Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Umbria*, 2 (1896): 379-472.



in the compilation of payment orders or the recording of sums paid out³³. A binary system, so to speak, which meant the treasurer Paolo *Capugrassis* da Sulmona had to make careful annotations to guarantee a correct interpretation of the results reached at the end of the Treasury's first year of activity in Umbria.

The final balance of 1424³⁴ shows that in the city of Perugia alone 34,902 florins, 15 soldi and 9 denari, *moneta perusina* of the value of 36 bolognini or 90 soldi to each florin, were collected, *secundum consuetudinem dicte civitatis*. Expenditure amounted to 37,937 florins 46 soldi and 6 denari, equal to 32 bolognini or 80 soldi per florin. As it was a completely new situation for the treasurer, the difference between the value of the florins in the revenue and in expenditure³⁵ meant an additional operation had to be made in order to be able to compare results that were homogeneous from the point of view of the currency unit: expenditure calculated at 36 bolognini per florin therefore fell to 33,722 florins, 28 soldi and 6 denari, thus creating a surplus of just 200 florins³⁶. It is beyond the scope of this paper to explain how this basic parity in the balance was possible, though, according to Mario Caravale, it could be a consequence of the fact that the provincial treasurers' work went far beyond strictly fiscal matters³⁷. However, it is of greater interest to consider the papal official's policy on the monetary situation, whose internal mechanisms he too had to understand as a reflection of the specific nature of the territory to be administered.

The agreement signed with Martin V recognised the right of the *Camera dei conservatori della moneta e dei massari* of Perugia to use their traditional accounting system to calculate the expenditure at 36 bolognini to the florin³⁸. It was a way of keeping alive an old privilege granted in the past to the city by Popes Boniface and Innocent. The Treasury could only acknowledge and accept it by maintaining the practice that dated back to a time prior to Braccio da Montone.

33. Caravale, Mario. "Le entrate pontificie...": 84-85; Black, Christopher F. "Comune and the papacy in the government of Perugia, 1488-1540", *Annali della Fondazione italiana per la storia amministrativa*, 4 (1967).

34. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 1, reg. 2, c. 128r-128v; Palermo, Luciano. "Capitali pubblici e investimenti privati nell'amministrazione...".

35. The books of the Treasurer of the Camera Urbis, Giovanni Astalli, also have a double accounting system: the revenue is in florins at 47 soldi and the expenditure in gold florins of the Camera at 50 bolognini, see: Palermo, Luciano. "Capitali pubblici e investimenti privati nell'amministrazione...": 520-521.

36. *Advertendum que in dicta civitate flor. Recipitur semper ad introitum de bol. Trigintasex vel de solidos nonaginta et ad exitum solvitur de bolonnini tringintadue de solidos octaginta ut supra sic ergo bolongeni quatuor seu solidos decem pro quolibet fiorino di introitum ad exitum retinetur et remanetur ad utilitatis camera prefata civitatis under floreni 37.937 solidos XLVI et denarios VI de bolonnini 32 vel solidos 80 reducti ad fiorini de bolonnini 36 vel de solidos 90 ascendetur ad summam 33.722 florinos 28 et denarios 6.*

37. Caravale, Mario. "Le entrate pontificie...": 87-88.

38. The agreements signed by the comune of Perugia and Martin V on July 18, 1424 stated that *singule solutiones fiende in Camera Conservatorum et Massariorum Communis Perusii [...] debeant ad rationem triginta sex bolognenorum pro quolibet floreno, detracta gabella, que detrai consueta erat tempore quo sancte memorie domini Bonifatii et Innocentii dominum dicte Civitatis habuerunt et prout et sicut antique regulationes dicte Camere disponebant, antequam Braccius gubernationem dicte civitatis Perusii haberet*, Fumi, Luigi. *Inventario e spoglio dei registri della tesoreria apostolica...*: 45.



This episode helps to illustrate the practical consequences of the monetary policy adopted, which can be ascertained by broadening the analysis to the Treasury register for the whole of 1424. In fact, expenditure, from the point of view of the coinage, offers a very varied picture³⁹, with a clear tendency to apply the Perugian custom directly with a gold florin equal to 80 soldi or 32 bolognini (60%) or to use it as a point of reference for other coinage, especially the florin for 38 bolognini, though it is not clear whether this is the same as the papal florin at 39 bolognini⁴⁰. As can be seen from the list below there were in fact a number of parities indicating a very fluid monetary situation in which the influence of the local tradition emerges against the unintrusive presence of Rome⁴¹. A very emblematic example is provided by the payment order issued by the papal legate, the Cardinal of Bologna, by which the Roman Giovanni Caffarelli had to pay the conservatori della moneta's wages by recording them at four libre per florin, as was usual in the *camera perugina*⁴².

- (a) *camera perugina* florins at 80 soldi per florin: 55 entries.
- (b) florins at 38 bolognini converted into *camera* florins at 32 bolognini: 13 entries.
- (c) *camera di Perugia* florins at 32 bolognini: 8 entries.
- (d) Apostolic Camera florins at 39 bolognini converted into *camera di Perugia* florins at 32 bolognini: 7 entries.
- (e) florins at 38 bolognini: 7 entries.
- (f) florins at 38 bolognini converted into *camera* florins at 80 soldi per florin: 5 entries.
- (g) florins at 96 soldi per florin converted into *camera* florins at 80 soldi per florin: 3 entries.
- (h) florins at 90 soldi per florin converted into *camera* florins at 80 soldi per florin: 3 entries.
- (i) florins for four libre per florin: 2 entries.
- (j) florins at 38 bolognini: 2 entries.
- (k) florins at 90 soldi per florin: 2 entries.
- (l) for florins converted into *camera* florins at 32 bolognini per florin: 1 entry.

39. Perugia in the late 14th century has been likened to a monetary *mare magnum*, Mira, Giuseppe. "Alcune 'resistenze' nell'economia perugina: misure e monete all'inizio dell'Età Moderna", *Storia e cultura in Umbria nell'età moderna, Atti del settimo convegno di studi umbri, Gubbio, 18-22 maggio 1969*. Perugia: Facoltà di lettere e filosofia dell'Università degli Studi di Perugia, 1972: 117-145, especially, 138.

40. The *cameral* payment orders issued in the 1420s refer to *fiorini o ducati d'oro di camera*: Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Mandati camerale. On the papal florin, see: Palermo, Luciano. "I mercanti e la moneta a Roma nel primo Rinascimento", *Economia e società a Roma tra Medioevo e Rinascimento. Studi dedicati a Arnold Esch*, Anna Esposito, Luciano Palermo, eds. Rome: Viella, 2005: 243-281.

41. *Fiorini doemilia quattrocento de camera apostolica a bol. 39 pro fiorino li quali reducti a fiorini di camera de Perugia a bol. 32 pro fiorino secondo lo stile de la camera di Perugia vagliono fiorini 2925*. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 1, reg. 1, c. 72r, 73r.

42. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 2, reg. 6, c. 3r.



The picture becomes even more complex if we extend our analysis to other Umbrian towns. In 1424-1425 the Bishop of Todi handed over 50 gold florins to the provincial treasurer at the bank of the Perugian merchant Angelo Renzi⁴³, and the communities in the valley of the River Topino had to pay a tax of 21 libbre and 9 soldi in Perugian florins at 39 bolognini⁴⁴. The subsidies of Nocera, Trevi, San Giovanni and Montefalco⁴⁵, to mention just a few, were calculated in Perugian florins, whilst further south the area of Orvieto was much more under the direct influence of the central authorities: its contribution to the Apostolic Camera was 50 libbre *ad rationem decem bolognini pro quolibet libra di moneta romana*⁴⁶. However, baiocchi were already being used regularly in the accounts of the treasury of Orvieto in 1425. Baiocchi, money of uncertain origin that were to thrive from the middle of the 15th century onwards⁴⁷, were used in many circumstances as a currency that could be exchanged for bolognini⁴⁸: *libre baiocchorum ad rationem decem baiocchi pro libra*, or *libras 145 in baiocchis que reductis ad fiorini ad rationem 58 baiocchi pro fiorino*⁴⁹. Parity was one florin = 58 baiocchi or bolognini = 5, 8 libbre.

The work of the Treasury in Umbria continued in the same way for the next two years between 1426 and 1427, although there was a simplification in the recording of the types of coinage used. In expenditure almost always gold florins were used at 39 bolognini *reducti a fiorini di camera ad soldi 80 pro fiorino*⁵⁰. Nothing was clearly defined, but it could perhaps mark the beginning of a tighter papal policy over the territories to be administered.

We can continue our analysis by looking at the revenue and expenditure for the years 1429-30 which give a more mixed picture of the coinage. The table below shows the amount of subsidies paid in 1429 by some Umbrian communities⁵¹.

Otricoli: 31 florins at 55 bolognini per florin.

Collescipoli: 23 florins at 62 bolognini per florin.

Narni: 200 florins at 62 bolognini per florin.

Trevi: 100 florins at 40 bolognini per florin veterorum sive marchianorum.

Cascia: 350 florins at 39 bolognini per florin veterorum sive marchianorum.

Norcia: 500 florins at 39 bolognini per florin veterorum sive marchianorum.

Spoletto: 600 florins at 39 bolognini per florin veterorum sive marchianorum.

43. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 1, reg. 3, c. 51r

44. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 1, reg. 3, c. 93r.

45. Caravale, Mario. "Le entrate pontificie...": 85-86.

46. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 1, reg. 3, c. 73r.

47. Piccinni, Gabriella; Travaini, Lucia. *Il libro del pellegrino (Siena, 1382-1446). Affari, uomini, monete nell'ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala*. Naples: Liguori, 2003: 141.

48. In the area around Rome the bolognino first appeared in 1368-1370 during the reign of Urban V. Travaini, Lucia. "Le monete a Roma nel Medioevo". *Studi Romani*, 37/1-2 (1989): 38-49.

49. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 1, reg. 3, c. 43r.

50. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 2, reg. 11

51. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 3, reg. 13: *Bartholomeus Thome de Tuscanella commissarium S.d.n. ad exigendum pecunias subsidiarum sive tallarum in terris infrascriptis*.



It is hard to appreciate the true significance of the differences in the nominal value of the florin from a real economic point of view or identify the coinage actually in circulation that had not been recorded in the previous year's tax lists. However, a close comparison between the two years adds another piece to the complex picture of the financial administration of the Umbrian area. In 1430⁵² the great innovation was the use of the papal florin of 40 bolognini (*moneta nuova*), converted into Perugian florins at 39 bolognini⁵³, in quite a large number of places (Todi, Assisi, Perugia, Gualdo, Nocera, Montefalco...). In the final statement of the Treasury the revenue was still recorded at 36 bolognini per florin and expenditure at 32, but the fact that the gold papal florin was adopted as a point of reference is worthy of note.

The use of the Roman coinage became well-established in the course of the 1430s. In the extraordinary subsidy of 1444⁵⁴ all the sums paid by communities⁵⁵ were recorded in gold *camera* florins at a value of 46 bolognini without any comparisons or parity as in the past, with the exception of Spoleto⁵⁶ and Città del Castello which preferred the old conversion of 40 and 42 bolognini respectively, though they were considered 'old coinage' by this time⁵⁷. Only at Perugia, as the corresponding *Liber Camere*⁵⁸ shows, did the local tradition of accounting florins at 36 bolognini for revenue and 32 bolognini for expenditure continue.

At the end of these brief notes clearly there are too few definite elements available for us to be able to draw conclusions. During the first decades of the 15th century the revival of the temporal power of the pope over the territories of the ancient estate of St Peter proved to be a long and complex process and the coinage, with its symbolic meanings and uses, was indeed a potentially efficient means of political consolidation⁵⁹. Monetary matters implicit in the work of the Treasury of Umbria, taken here just as a sample of a much broader research, help us to understand the compromises made in the short term, but also suggest a gradual development in administrative practices towards greater harmonisation: on the one hand, there was the continuation of Perugian customs concerning coinage to which the authorities

52. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 3, reg. 18: *Computa d. Nicolai de Valle thesaurarii perugini de aliis terris quod de camera perugina*.

53. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 4, reg. 23. Although they are not very frequent, *camera* ducati at 40 soldi do appear in: Fumi, Luigi. *Inventario e spoglio dei registri della tesoreria apostolica...*: 101.

54. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 5, reg. 26.

55. Trevi, Montefalco, Bevagna, Foligno, Norcia, Monteleone, Spoleto, Todi, Limigiano, Castagnola, Gualdo, Cascia, Montesanto, "terra Arnolfo", Città di Castello, Visso and Val Topino.

56. Panvini, Francesco. "La zecca di Spoleto dalle origini al XV secolo". *Spoletium*, 12/14 (1970): 9-15.

57. On the monetary policy followed at Città di Castello in the 14th century, see: Franceschini, Gino. "Regolamenti sul corso della moneta a Città di Castello nel sec. XIV". *Bollettino della Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Umbria*, 47 (1950): 216-218.

58. Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale I. Tesoreria dell'Umbria, b. 5, reg. 25.

59. On the close connection between the growing power of the states and the processes linked to the monetization in Europe in the late Middle Ages, see: Boyer-Xambeau, Marie-Thérèse; Deleplace, Ghislain; Gillard, Lucien. *Banchieri e principi. Moneta e credito nell'Europa del Cinquecento*. Turin: Einaudi, 1991: 180-181.



had to show a more conciliatory attitude, but on the other hand, a greater tendency towards the unification of small and medium-sized urban centres in the region through the use of the gold papal currency. This will be the subject of future and more detailed research.

