Il papa guerriero: Giulio II nello spazio pubblico europeo, by Massimo Rospocher**.** Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento Monografie Series (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2015; pp. 392. €32).

As Massimo Rospocher explains in the introduction to this book, Julius II is 'amongst the most important personalities to have shaped our collective imagination of the Renaissance' (p. 12). For Rospocher, he was 'the epitome of the Renaissance pope, and of the dual nature of his power—Italian prince and Roman pontiff, European sovereign and universal pastor'; he was the middle figure in a triumvirate of occupants of St Peter's chair whose exploits are widely seen as defining the period. Yet Julius has neither Alexander VI's reputation for deviousness or corruption nor Leo X's for corpulence and extravagance. Instead, he is known for his preoccupation with war: among the many quixotic acts of his ten-year reign, Julius formed two Holy Leagues, subjugated Perugia and Bologna, placed Venice under interdict and excommunicated the duke of Ferrara. In short, he was the man who gave the Church *triumphans* and *militans* their most visible expressions yet on the Italian and European stage. Contemporaries wrote about him at length because of that: many found him angry and impetuous, despotic or resolute. Machiavelli famously branded him, above all, lucky. Much of what we know about Julius and his activities comes from Christine Shaw's excellent biography (now nearly a quarter of a century old) which finessed and corrected presumptions in older papal historiography. But Rospocher, in thinking primarily about how Julius' peers portrayed him, has cleverly developed an angle which Shaw did not fully consider and which now has the potential to reshape rather radically our understandings of Julius' personality, of the Renaissance papacy and of the public sphere in early sixteenth-century Europe. This book, despite its title, is not really about Julius at all, but rather about how news and opinions were disseminated during the period of transition between manuscript and print culture. Rospocher uses Julius and the debates surrounding him to explore how, and how effectively, the pope, his supporters and his detractors harnessed the new and evolving medium of print as a tool of mass communication. He shows, among other things, the essentially political nature of much contemporary commentary about Julius—a potentially significant finding in itself for papal historians—and the remarkable exchange of common themes between high culture and the street, for this is a study

which is both rich in detail and also makes a significant contribution to historical scholarship.

Rospocher divides his book into three parts. The first examines positive images of Julius; the second, negative propaganda produced by the Italian city-states that opposed him; and, third, commentary on his actions as pope from France and England. This structure is straightforward enough and Rospocher exploits it very effectively to undertake both extended investigations into individual texts and also to compare them. The first section contains five chapters which explore the symbolism of the oak tree (a symbol derived from Julius' family name of della Rovere), Julius' adoption of imperial imagery and the imagery of crusade, and the parallels he self-consciously drew between himself and Julius Caesar. Interestingly, Rospocher challenges the weight that previous historians have placed on the martial dimension to Julius' self-promotion, demonstrating that he was also more than willing to co-opt the iconography of peace when the occasion demanded (this iconography is more often associated with Leo X, who is perhaps assumed to have used it in contrast to Julius). Rospocher ends the section with a chapter on Julius as Italy's 'liberator'—a concept which Julius clearly prioritised in papal propaganda alongside *pax romana* and *pax ecclesiae*, and which exercised him almost as much as it later did Machiavelli. The book's second section probes Julius' reputation deeper: it shows how, all too often, Julius' opponents took his own rhetoric and imagery and used it against him. Thus, for example, Julius' carefully cultivated association with Julius Caesar was invoked by those who wished to accuse him of tyranny. Satirical inscriptions in Bologna and Rome claimed that the 'P.M.' after his name stood not for *Pontifex Maximus*but for *Pestis Maxima*. His calls for a Crusade against Venice in 1509 were turned against him by his Bolognese opponents when they represented Julius' troops as Moors, Saracens and Turks in 1510. The book's final section shows how both critical and laudatory representations of Julius surfaced outside Italy. Henry VIII of England, who sided with Julius against Louis XII of France, may have had a hand in supporting the panegyrics such as *The Gardyners Passetaunce* (1512). However, in a delicious irony, these texts fell out of favour after Henry's break with Rome and were replaced by highly anti-papal tracts originally written, for the most part, by Julius' (and Henry's) French enemies. Rospocher accords the most famous such text, the *Julius Exclusus*—which was published after Julius' death and is usually attributed to Erasmus—its own space in an Epilogue.

Rospocher's is a well-written book—plain in its terminology, clear in its arguments and in stylish Italian. He and his publisher Il Mulino should be especially commended for the extensive use and reproduction of images in this book. The images do not merely illustrate the text but, in the way Rospocher invokes them, constitute an important category of source materials in their own right. Rospocher's bibliography is also thorough and detailed, but does perhaps highlight one of this work's limitations: the study concentrates almost exclusively on the period when Julius actually reigned and so, for example, cannot do that much to situate the reception of Julius during his pontificate in the history of the pope's evolving image over the *longue durée*. For this reviewer, that is a pity (rather than a criticism) because, in many ways, Rospocher offers an exemplary model here for engaging with such questions by marshalling various kinds of evidence and attending closely to reception. Perhaps this lacuna will be filled in his future research? Certainly, historians of the papacy, sixteenth-century Italy and early modern Europe will all benefit from that.

MILES PATTENDEN

Wolfson College, Oxford